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HANDBOOK
TO
HITCHIN

AND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD,

CONTAINING

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE TOWN,
AND A DESCRIPTION OF ITS PLACES OF PUBLIC
WORSHIP,
PUBLIC BUILDINGS, CHARITABLE AND LITERARY
INSTITUTIONS, &c., ALSO
A DESCRIPTIVE GLANCE AT THE SURROUNDING
TOWNS, VILLAGES, & PLACES WORTHY OF NOTE.

COMPILED BY C. BISHOP.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

Hitchin :

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY
PATERNOSTER & HALES, "ADVERTISER" OFFICE.

1875.

23

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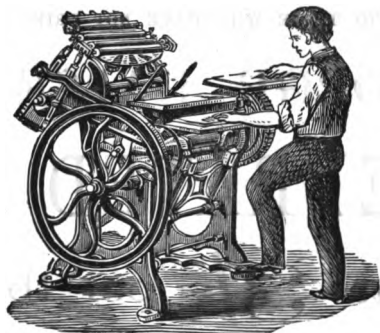
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OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

From the "HERTFORDSHIRE EXPRESS," Saturday, May 20th, 1871.

LOCAL LITERATURE.—Mr. C. Bishop, whose local knowledge and experience well fitted him for the task, has produced a very neat and interesting little Handbook to Hitchin and the neighbourhood, published by Mr. Paternoster. Among the attractions of the work are two page engravings, from sketches by Birket Foster, one giving a view of Hitchin Market-place as it was seen on a Tuesday in 1855; and the other presenting a view of the Priory, as the centre of a pretty landscape. The letter-press contents of the handbook comprise a brief historical sketch of Hitchin and the various places of interest and importance in its vicinity; besides a careful and comprehensive account of the places of worship, schools, charitable and other institutions, &c., in the town. The little sketch at the end entitled "Panoramic Survey," will be found, like other portions of the book, to contain matter interesting to all, and new to many residents in our pretty and well-favoured little town. Mr. Bishop deserves praise and encouragement for the completeness of his materials, and the care bestowed upon their arrangement.

From the "HERTS. GUARDIAN," Saturday, May 27th, 1871.

HANDBOOK OF HITCHIN AND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD, by C. Bishop. [Hitchin, Paternoster, Sun-street].—A very nicely and carefully-compiled Handbook and Guide to the quiet town of Hitchin: done in very good taste, and entirely devoid of the stupid egotism which generally spoils handbooks. It begins with a description of the ancient buildings, the Priory, and other religious houses: then the places of worship—the Churches and Chapels.—Tilehouse Street (Salem) Chapel is a very interesting place. There is a chair in the vestry presented by John Bunyan, and the first Pastor was a Mr. John Wilson, member of Bunyan's chapel at Bedford. Then the schools are noticed; Hitchin is well supplied, and stands not in need of such compulsory aids to education as the bill of last year, which is anything but a credit to the country. The Charitable Institutions are next noted, and of these Hitchin has reason to be proud. Then the Religious Institutions, Provident Societies, public buildings, &c.—with a lot of miscellaneous information about bankers, manufacturers, fire-brigade, &c. The concluding part is not the least interesting—page 40 to 65. It tells of Stevenage, Baldock, Offley, and other places, recording much curious and antiquarian history, with notices of Henry Trigg, his will and coffin at Stevenage, and Mr. Lucas the hermit of Redcotes-green; with notes of the Botany of the district. Altogether, a very full and complete guide; and we congratulate Mr. Bishop on the signal good taste which pervades his production, and the manifest success he has achieved. There are three engravings, of the Priory, the Market-place (1855), and of Mr. Perks's Mount Pleasant Lavender Field.

SECOND EDITION.

HANDBOOK

TO

Hitchin and the Neighbourhood,

CONTAINING

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE TOWN,
AND A DESCRIPTION OF ITS PLACES OF PUBLIC
WORSHIP,
PUBLIC BUILDINGS, CHARITABLE AND LITERARY
INSTITUTIONS, &c., ALSO
A DESCRIPTIVE GLANCE AT THE SURROUNDING
TOWNS, VILLAGES, & PLACES WORTHY OF NOTE.

COMPILED BY C. BISHOP.



Hitchin :

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY
PATERNOSTER & HALES, "ADVERTISER" OFFICE.

1875.

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

The Compiler feels great diffidence in placing the following pages before the public; unforeseen delays having added to their imperfections. Errors incident to such an undertaking will be found despite the utmost care to prevent their intrusion, but he trusts that these blemishes will not be a material detracting to its claim as a Handbook. This being the first attempt to publish the fragmentary jottings of various writers relative to the town and neighbourhood, the Editor hopes that critics will not be too severe, and that, with all its imperfections, this compilation will be found of some service to the public generally; and he takes this opportunity of thanking those gentlemen who have so kindly assisted him.

*** Any information relative to the History of the Town and Neighbourhood, however brief, will be thankfully received.

Hitchin,

June, 1871.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

The unexpected success which attended the issue of the First Edition of this little Work, every copy having been sold in a very short time, and enquiries for it being continually made since it has been out of print, have determined the Compiler to issue a Second Edition, revised up to the present date, with emendations and a considerable addition of interesting information; he therefore hopes that this edition will also be found useful, instructive, and amusing.

*“ Gazette ” Office,
Tunbridge Wells,
February, 1875.*

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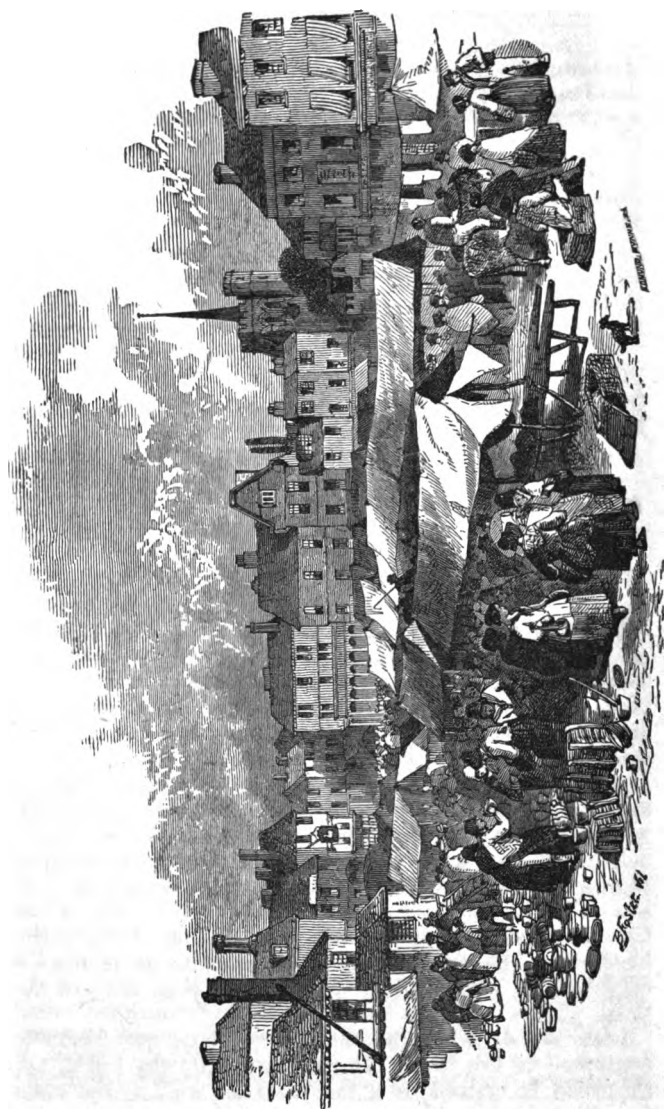
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HITCHIN MARKET PLACE—AS IT WAS IN 1855.



HANDBOOK TO HITCHIN AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.

Historical Sketch.

THIS Town is of considerable antiquity, and its early history is veiled in obscurity. Much doubt has been expressed by various writers as to the origin of its name. Salmon, at p. 160, says—"It is written in Domesday Book 'Hiz;' when the town is meant, or the Half Hundred, which takes its name from the town. Doubtless the old name was 'Hitch;' but if we are to suppose a Norman dictating that syllable to the clerk, with an 'H' at the beginning and another at the end, so difficult of pronunciation to the French, we may allow it to come as near the truth as that record generally is." It was called in the time of the Saxons, 'Hicce,' and in the Charter of Donations to Earl Harold from Edward the Confessor—'Hitche.' It seems to have its name from a neighbouring wood called 'Hitch,' which once reached the town. There is now a wood in the neighbourhood called 'Hitch Wood,' which has been very large, and probably continued to the town. It may be asked, why might not the wood be named from the town, as well as the town from the wood? There was a wood before there was a

town. Some will derive its name from the Ikening way, and that Ickleford may be easily corrupted from Hitchingford, but if so we might expect to find foundations and buildings continued to Ickleford,* which, the nature of the ground, being moory, will not allow; and further, a town of a mile extent at least, lying upon a military way, would have made us look for a station here, and expect to find coins."

In Norden's Hertfordshire, the writer says:—

"Hitching or Hitchine, more rightly Hitch-End, because it lyeth at the end of a famous wood called 'Hitch,' of which also the Hundred of Hitch, called 'Hitcher Haulf Hundred,' takes its name, and not of the town which is *quasi terminus* the utter edge or end of that wood. Though time have extinguished that part of the wood which laie towards the town. It cannot be 'Hitching' which soundeth *de-pratis*, unless it be in the sense, as *lucus* is, a thick wood, *de-lucendo* of yielding light, being altogether dark, so Hitchinge of meadow ground because it hath no meadows† and yet standeth in a valley between the Hills."

Other writers aver that it derives its name from the river Hiz which runs through it.

Hitchin formerly constituted part of the possessions of the Mercian Kings. It was also celebrated for the staple commodities of the kingdom, and many merchants of the staple of Calais made it their place of residence, and several are buried in the church. It was also a place of note at the period of Alfred's division of the county into Hundreds. It remained in the possession of the Saxon kings, and continued in the possession of the crown till the time of the Confessor, by whom it was with other possessions granted to Earl Harold, who retained possession of it during his life, but upon his falling in battle this manor once more reverted to the crown, and was granted to Bernard de Baliol, and after passing through a variety of possessors the manor again reverted to the Crown, to which it still continues to be attached.

Hitchin, in the time of Offa, must have been a place of great note, he having lived and held his courts here whilst building his palace at Offley. Many of his nobles and

* Stukeley says that foundations have been discovered, see Willbury Hill."

† The author is incorrect here, as there were meadows, as shown by old names of grounds, viz.: "Benge Mead," "Fishpond Closes," "Grove Mill Meadow," and "Sorrel Mead."

friends also resided here and in the neighbourhood, who continued for a very long time after his death. Eadrick, a relation of Offa, lived at Hitchin two years, and was chosen Abbot of St. Albans, in 794, vacant by the death of Willigod, the first Abbot, chosen by Offa. Offa's nobles built a religious house at Hitchin, in the year 792. Egfrith, son of Offa, laid the first stone and dedicated it to St. Andrew. It was a noble pile of buildings. Its burial ground was very large. The Ickening way went close by it on one side, and the brook on the other.

Blomville also notes that this town must have been equal in splendour to St. Albans in the time of Offa. It was large and had many buildings on each side of the Ickening Street towards Willbury, as has been proved by their foundations.

MANOR OF HITCHIN PORTMAN & FOREIGN.

Extract from the Court Rolls :—

That the Occupier of every ancient Messuage or Cottage within the Township of Hitchin hath a Right of Common for such cattle, and at such times as are hereinafter specified upon the Green Commons and the Lammas Meadows, but no person hath any Right of Common within this Township as appurtenant to or in respect of any Messuage or Cottage built since the expiration of the 13th year of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, unless the same shall have been erected on the site of an ancient messuage then standing.

"That any person having Right of Common in respect of the Messuage or Cottage in his actual occupation, may turn on the Green Commons and Lammas Meadows Two Cows and One Bullock or Cow Calf under the age of two years.

"That the Rectors Improprate of the Rectory of the Parish of Hitchin or their Lessees of the said Rectory, are bound to find a Bull for the Cows of the said Township and to go with the herd thereof, and that no other Bull or Bull Calf may be turned on the Commons.

"That Butt's Close is the sole Cow Common from the 6th day of April, being Old Lady Day inclusive, to the 12th day of May also inclusive, and after that time is used for collecting in the morning the herd going to the other Commons.

"That Orton Mead, including the Haydon's, is an Open Common upon and from the 13th of May, called Old May Day, till the 14th day of February, called Old Candlemas Day.

"That the Flats are also open Common upon and from Whitsunday till the 6th day of April.

"That Cock Mead and Bury Mead become commonable on the 13th day of August, called Old Lammas Day, and continue open till the 6th day of April.

"That the Common Fields called Bury Field and Welchman's Croft, are commonable for Cows only, from the time when the corn is cut and

carried therefrom until the 12th day of November, called All Saint's, and that the Close of Thomas Wilshere, gent., called Bury Field Close, is part of the Common Field, called Bury Field, and the Closes of John Crouch Priest, called Ickleford Closes, are part of Welchman's Croft, and are respectively commonable at the same times with the other parts of such respective common fields.

"That every occupier of an ancient Messuage or Cottage hath Right of Common upon the Green Commons, except Butt's Close, for one Gelding from and after the 13th day of August until the 14th day of February.

"That no person entitled to Common for his Cattle may turn or suffer the same to remain on any part of the Commons between the hours of six in the evening and six in the morning."

J. Hawkins, Esq., is the present Steward of the Manor.

THE RECTORY MANOR.

At the time of the Conqueror's General Survey, the Great Manor of Hiz was parcel of the King's Demesnes; and I presume the Church of Hiz, though not mentioned in the survey was then parcel of or appendant to the Manor.

Henry the II.* gave to the Church and Nuns of Helenstow the Church of St. Andrew, of Hicche.

From the time of Henry I. therefore according to the explanation given in the note, the Church of Hicche, which before was a Rectory, became appropriated to the use of the Nuns of Helenstow, now called Elstow in Bedfordshire, who from thenceforth were patrons of the Vicarage, and the Glebe or Demesne Lands of the Rectory became a Manor in reputation as did most of the Rectories which were appropriated for the use of Monasteries before the passing of the Statute of Edward the I., called the Statute *Quia emptores terrorum*.

It is not very easy to ascertain what is meant by the "Monastery of this Vill." The Gilbertine Nuns were

* It ought to be Henry the I. though the Monasticon says Henry the II. Henry the II. was not Lord of this Manor. The Baliols had the great Manor of Hicche temp William Rufus, and it is not improbable that this grant was a confirmation of what had been given to the Nuns in the time of the Conqueror, because the great Manor of Hicche having been given by the King to the Baliols in the time of William Rufus, the power of disposing of the Church would have passed to them with the Manor if it had not prior to that time, been given away to a religious use.

not introduced into England until 1148, nor the Friars Carmelites until 1240, so that it can have no reference to the Priory of White Carmelites or the Priory or Biggin. But it may be observed that the Charter of King Henry the I. to the Nuns of Elenestowe, in which he gives to them the Church of St. Andrew, of Hiche, and its chapels is erroneously called in the Monastican the Charter of Henry the II. for the title used in the Charter "*Henricus Rex Angl. Archiepis copis*" &c., is certainly the style of Henry the I., as Henry the II. always added after the title of the King of England "*Dux Normannica and Aquitannica et comes Andegarica*" &c., and before the survey was made Judith the Countess (Niece of the Conqueror) had founded the Nunnery of Elenestowe; to which the Rectory and Rectorial Manor of Hitchin afterwards belonged. And this Rectory with the Rectorial Manor might have been given to the Nuns in the time of the Conqueror and confirmed only by Henry I. And if that conjecture be true there was no impropriety in styling the Estate of the Nuns at this place the Lands of the Monastery of this Vill.

King Henry VIII. granted to his Consort Katherine of Arragon the Manor of Hitchin for her life,* and upon the dissolution of his marriage with that Queen, granted it for life to Anne Boleyn. King James I. by will of Privy Seal, dated at Harefield, on the 19th of September, in the first year of his reign, granted the Manor of Hitchin to his Consort Queen Anne for her life with a power of granting Leases for 21 years, and afterwards granted the reversion of this Manor, by his letters patent dated at Westminster on the 11th of October, in the 17th year of his reign, to Charles Prince of Wales and his Heirs for ever. On the 1st March, Anno 7 George I, a Lease of this Manor was granted to James Bogdani, by the Crown for 31 years.† In the year

* This Manor was let by Queen Katherine to the Right Francis Lord Holles, by Lease dated 7th February, 1689, for 75 years, from Lady Day preceding, for three lives, viz. Dearill Holles, son of F. Lord Holles, Lucas Hemmings, son of Samuel Hemmings, of Elstow, gent., and George Read son of George Read, if they should so long live.

† The premises granted by this Lease were according to the Documents in the office of the Auditor of the Land Revenue: two Water Mills, one called the Shotting Mill and the other Port Mill; the Fishery in the Pools within the Manor, Stallage, Piccage, and Shops, with their

1747, a lease of this Manor was granted to William Bogdani, Esq., for the term of 31 years, which was renewed to him for the term of $20\frac{1}{2}$ years, from 28th January, 1778, after the expiration of which a lease of the same was granted on the 28th July, 1798, to William Maurice Bogdani, Esq., for the term of $17\frac{1}{2}$ years. On the 2nd of December, 1815, a lease of this Manor was granted for 28 years to Anthony Rhudde, Esq., and assigned in the 14th March, 1817, by his Executors to William Wilshire, Esq., of Hitchin.

In Chauncy's History there is a map of the town of Hitchin dedicated to the Right Worshipful Sir Ralph Radcliffe, Knight, and other gentlemen inhabitants of the town, by a J. Drapentier. This is a kind of Birdseye view, and has a curious miniature figure of the church. Near the Priory is Mill Lane with a Water Mill. There is a Bowling Green marked where the Red Lion Inn once stood, (the present site of the Corn Exchange,) besides the present one in Sun Street.

Stowe in his Chronicles, p. 524 says:—

"In the year 1525 Henry VIII. visited Hitchin and stayed several days a Hawking and then went to Temple Dinsley; while following his Hawk, in leaping over a ditch with a pole, the pole broke, so that if one Edmond Mody, a footman, had not leaped into the water and lifted up his head, which was fast in the clay, he would have been drowned."

From a MS. History of the Town, extracts from which we freely use, we quote the following:—

"When I was in Hitchin, in July, 1819, I met with an ample account of the place in MS., under the following Title—'History of Hitchin,' containing an Historical account thereof, from the earlier period to the present time. The Antiquities of the Church, Priory, and other buildings in its vicinity, by William Dunnage, postmaster, 1815.' In his preface he says, 'How far the testimony of the earlier part of this History is to be doubted I am not able to judge, but in support of its authenticity I have to assert that it is handed down to me from the testimony of John Blomville, one of the founders of the Priory of the White Carmelites, in Hitchin, and Thomas Cobham, a descendant of John Cobham another of the founders of the same. Unfortunately for posterity the books from

Appurtenances; the Fairs and Markets of Hitchin with their Appurtenances; Tolls of the Fairs and Markets; all the Manor of Hitchin, with its Rights, Members, and Appurtenances, Perquisites of Courts, Goods and Chattels of Felons and Fugitives, Felo de see, Waifs, Ectrays, Wartes, &c., also the Annual Rent of £13 2s. 6d. payable for the two Mills aforesaid. The Shotting Mill and Port Mill have since been sold under the Land Revenue Act.

whence I copied the following pages were, through negligence allowed to become so damp that upon turning over the leaves, in translating, they completely dropped from the fingers upon the slightest touch, and probably the most essential part of the History of this town is for ever lost. Every year, and I may add, every month produces fresh proofs of its antiquity; some of them much earlier than the Romans, who (in common with other places situate in the eastern part of the kingdom) visited and resided in this neighbourhood. We can even trace monumental remains of the Britons themselves, as the Barrows or Tumuli on Willbury Hills, and other stations, existing to this day will testify, and if the assertions of Thomas Stackhouse, a gentleman, who, for several years past, has made this kind of antiquity his immediate study, may be admitted, we may be well convinced that this town and neighbourhood have been the continued residence of Ancient Britons, Romans, and Saxons. The Tumuli before mentioned, the Roman coins found at various periods and places in this vicinity, and the Saxon architecture still remaining, are, undoubtedly, proofs of this assertion. Hitchin is situated in a valley. It is defended from the north and east winds by hills. The air is salubrious, and the numerous pleasant walks which surround the town are very enchanting. For extensive views and variety of shades it may vie with most inland towns. The park, a short distance from the town, comprising within its pales about one hundred acres, is extremely delightful when viewed from different stations. Its hills and dales in general arrest the notice of the traveller; the prospects are beautiful and charming. The fishpond and shrubberies (which are planted in tasteful order) add much to the beauty of the scene. At the further end of the park, next to Charlton, is a cold bath of pure spring water."*

Hitchin may be regarded as the centre of a native Flora comparatively rich in number of species, and as furnishing a fair average of rare and choice plants, some of which vie in beauty with the cultivated flowers of our gardens. In connection also with the botany of the district, the undulating ground at the outskirts of the town, especially in the South, South-East, and South-West, opens up, at almost every step, the most charming views of the surrounding country. Offley Holes, Offley Park, Lilley Hoo, and our own Park are dotted over with hawthorns, giving a most pleasing variety to the landscape, and furnishing with their branches a home, and by their fruit an abundant supply of food for thousands of birds, which in spring and early summer enchant the wanderer with their varied song. We have, too, a considerable variety of trees, some of the trunks of which, as those of the oak, exhibit curves rivaling those of an Etruscan vase. There is a grand old yew tree in a meadow at Offley, the age of which must be

* This bath is now the source of the town supply of water.

numbered by centuries. Among plants of a more humble growth, the Orchid family is well represented by the Fly Orchis and the Bee Orchis, so named from a striking resemblance to the bee and the fly respectively. The Dwarf Orchis, with its dense spike of flowers, of a dark purple, grows in various spots on the Chalk Downs. Some years ago a small group of this species flourished in Bury Meads, but has at length died out, being overpowered by a more vigorous crop of grass. There are several others of this tribe that deserve mention, as the Butterfly Orchis, for its large spike of flowers and delicious scent. The Bird's Nest Orchis, (*rara avis*!) for its dingy flowers and clustered fibrous root, which is supposed to resemble a bird's nest. The Ladies' Tresses, a small plant with a spiral spike of greenish flowers, growing on Lilley Hoo and Pegsdon Barns. Several specimens of this Orchid were found not long since growing in a piece of waste ground midway between Hitchin and Ickleford and in the belt of trees at the bottom of Preston Hill. Belonging to a widely different family is the Pasque Flower, or Anemone Pulsatilla, with its golden cluster of stamens surrounded by a purple blossom of silky texture. This flower is honoured every year by a number of visitors, and, therefore, its locality need not be mentioned. In Hitch Wood and Wain Wood there is a plant belonging to the Pea tribe, frequently clinging to branches of hazel, which are covered with elegant clusters of light purple flowers. This is the Wood Vetch or *Vicia Sylvatica*, an extremely handsome plant, and which, no doubt, might easily be cultivated. Of wild geraniums the Dusky Crane's Bill, found only in a few spots, is remarkable for its dark chocolate-coloured petals, and for the appendage to its seeds, which consists of an elastic coil, spirally twisted when dry, but gradually uncoiling with the application of moisture, so as even to bury itself after a shower of rain, if the soil on which it falls is tender enough. These and many other interesting plants will amply repay the searcher after wild flowers in this neighbourhood. Ferns, except the commonest, are getting very scarce about Hitchin.

In a field on the Bedford Road, Hops were cultivated, and until about 1828: the remains of a Hop Kiln stood near the east end of the Churchyard. The premises were

in possession of the Spencer family who now reside in Biggin Lane.

Lavender has been cultivated in the neighbourhood of Hitchin upwards of half a century. In England no less than 270 acres of land are devoted to the cultivation of lavender, and the average production is said to be about 9,000 lbs. annually. The lavender farms of England are situated at Hitchin, and at Mitcham in Surrey. Mr. William Ransom the well-known manufacturing chemist is a very large grower of lavender in and around Hitchin, and he sends out quantities of the essential oil from his laboratory every year, to all parts of the world.* Mr. S. Perks has also extensive lavender fields under cultivation. To those who have never seen a field of lavender in full bloom, which occurs in July, the sight would be a treat.

OCCURRENCES IN HITCHIN.

1739.

May 25.—Mr. George Whitfield came to Hitchin and began to preach in the Market Place, but the bells being set to ringing, he was under the necessity of going into the Sand Dells, where he preached to the populace.

1800.

July 14.—Bread 1s. 5½d. per quarter loaf. Wheat £4 19s. per load.
Aug. 25.—People employed to cut off barley from the straw in the fields which could not be mowed in consequence of its having been beaten down by excessive rains.

Oct. 7.—Wheat for seed £5 per load.

Dec. 14.—Proclamation to use only one quarter loaf a head per week.

Dec. 25.—Christmas Day—very mild.

1801.

Jan. 14.—Quarter loaf 1s. 6½d., white bread.

Feb. 10.—Wheat £5 14s. per load. Bread 1s. 8d. the quarter loaf.

*Some time since, a most interesting paper, by C. W. Quin, Esq., F.C.S., headed "The Chemical Manufactories of Great Britain," was published in the *Chemist and Druggist*, which gave a capital description of the productions of Mr. Ransom's laboratory and the produce of his physic farm. Large quantities of Mr. Ransom's Essential Oils (of which he distills in his laboratory a great variety) are exported with his other well-known preparations to almost every country possessing commercial relations with England. Noticeable amongst these preparations are Pure Resin of Scamony, prepared from the root of *Convolvulus Scammonia*, which is gathered in Asia Minor expressly for him; and Podophylline, prepared from the American May-Apple, a medicinal agent which bids fair almost to supercede that dangerous metallic substance known as Calomel: of these, Mr. Ransom was the first maker in England.

1807.

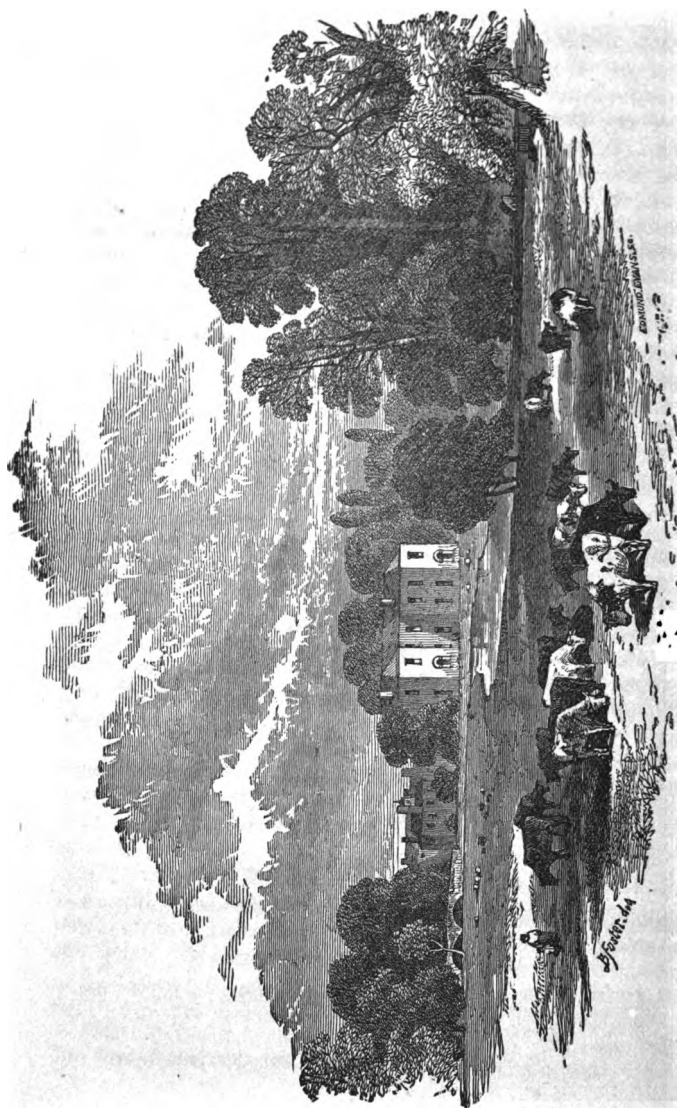
July 6.—Mail Coaches from London through Hitchin to Leeds passed through for the first time.

1809.

Oct. 25.—Jubilee in honour of His Majesty George III. ascending the Throne of Great Britain, commemorated by Public Dinners at the Sun Inn and Swan Inn and by Private Parties at their Dwelling Houses. A General Illumination in the evening.

The town, at present, consists of a Market Square, which is surrounded by shops and offices; Sun Street, formerly called Angel Street, Bucklersbury, and High Street run into it. Bancroft, a fine open street, chiefly the residences of private families, is the chief thoroughfare; the Stock Market is held here on Tuesdays. There are several other streets of minor importance. The population at the last census, including the hamlets, amounted to 8,851, since that time it has greatly increased. A market is held weekly (on Tuesday) and is one of the best stock and corn markets in the county. Mr. George Jackson and Messrs. Harding & Eve hold sales of stock at their yards on market days. The plait trade is extensively carried on in the town and neighbourhood.

The town is rich in charities, but we have not sufficient space to enumerate them. They amount to upwards of £600 per annum and are managed by trustees. Mr. James Shilcock is the clerk, and the following gentlemen are the trustees:—Right Hon. Lord Dacre, F. P. Delmé Radcliffe, Esq., C. C. Hale, Esq., J. Hawkins, Esq., W. Hawkins, Esq., O. Foster, Esq., Septimus Wright, Esq., F. W. T. Drake, Esq., C. E. Prime, Esq., F. Lucas, Esq., Rev. L. Hensley, and C. W. Wilshere, Esq. There is a separate trust for apprenticing poor fatherless boys, born in Hitchin, founded by Mr. Jacob Marsom. The present trustees are:—Mr. Beaver, Mr. George Paternoster, Mr. T. G. Pierson, Mr. C. Newton, Mr. S. Lucas, Mr. G. D. Groom, Mr. J. Lewin, and Mr. G. Jeeves.



THE PRIORY.

The Ancient Buildings of the Town :

THE PRIORY.

Few vestiges of the monastic buildings remain. This Priory for White Carmelites was founded here in the reign of Edward II. and dedicated to our Saviour and the Blessed Virgin. The friars held this house until the 9th of May in the 21st year of the reign of Henry VIII., when they surrendered it into the hands of that king. Henry suppressed the fraternity of the Carmelites and granted by patent the site of the house to Edward Watson and Henry Hudson, in fee, who conveyed it to Ralph Radcliffe, and it has from that time remained in possession of the Radcliffe family. Frederick Peter Delmé Radcliffe, Esq., is the present possessor. A beautiful park adjoins the Priory grounds. It is not very extensive, but from the undulating ground it is extremely picturesque, and there being public footpaths through it, it is a great boon to the inhabitants.

THE BIGGIN.

This was a small Priory of Gilbertine Nuns, situated near the church, and was endowed at the suppression with £13 16s. 0d. per annum. It was granted by Henry VIII. to John Cooke, and was by him used as a school-house, and, in 1654, devised with thirty-one acres of land to various charitable trusts, by John Kemp, schoolmaster. At present it is inhabited by a number of aged women.*

WHITE FRIARS.

At the top end of the town was a house of Carmelite Friars, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, founded by Edward II. about 1316. It was valued at £4 9s. 4d. per annum, and granted to Edward Watson and H. Hudson by Henry VIII. This was turned into a Grammar School by Ralph Radcliffe in the reign of Edward VI.—*Fuller's Worthies*, page 180.

THE BROTHERHOOD.

The chief mansion of the Biggin seems to have been a great old house in Bancroft, called "The Brotherhood,"

* A visit to this quaint building will be found interesting.

and was for some time in the occupation of Mr. Charles Nichols, an attorney, held of the Beguin Manor under a reserved rent of 4s. 4d., granted by King Henry to the Docwras, and from them it came to the Papworths, who sold it. There was a spacious hall, formerly used as a chapel, running through the house and over the porch, which extended over the present footpath with steps ascending both from the lower side and the road; and hall, entry, and great parlour, wainscoted with good oak. The premises extended as far as where the Workman's Hall now stands and to the premises now held by Mr. Tuke. There was formerly much painted glass, which was destroyed. In the garden adjoining to this house have been dug up human bones, that ground having been used as a cemetery in ancient times. It is supposed this house was a small cell of Benedictine Monks, subject to and in the holding of the Biggin Nunnery, that they might have confessors of their own. The houses now occupied by Messrs. Passingham, wine and spirit merchants, formed the central part of the frontage.

There are numerous other buildings of great antiquity still standing: of which we may enumerate the premises now occupied by Mr. W. Hall, as a brewery, in Tilehouse Street; "The Boot" public-house, in Bridge Street; the house with a crocodile gable, by the river, in Bridge Street, occupied by Mr. Garratt, baker; the residence known as the "Old Vicarage," now occupied by Mr. George Halsey; and the house at Bull corner in the occupation of Mr. Horn.

Places of Divine Worship.

THE PARISH CHURCH.

In 1115 the Church of St. Andrew was very much damaged by a hurricane which caused almost the whole of the North Aisle to become a heap of ruins, and totally destroyed many reliques of antiquity. Again in 1278 St. Andrew's Church was very much damaged by the shocks of an earthquake, the centre of the building gave way and one side of the Church fell in with part of the roof and it

was otherwise damaged. The Church was repaired in 1299. In 1304 the greater part of the roof fell and damaged many valuable ornaments of antiquity. In 1305 the present Church was built, and is a handsome structure of stone, occupying the site of a more ancient fabric, near the middle of the town. It is built in the pointed style, and is dedicated to St. Mary, upon the testimony of Cobham and Chauncy. But Mr. Bragley, author of "The Beauties of England and Wales," doubts this, and alleges it to be dedicated to St. Andrew, and that the modern appellation of "St. Mary" belonged more properly to a guild or fraternity in the Church, as appears from the inscription on the monument of Thomas Abbot in the South Chancel.—*MS. History.*

Chauncy under the heading "The Manor of the Rectory of Hitche," says:—

"King William Rufus gave the Church of St. Andrew of Hitche, with the Chapels, one Virgate of Land worth £40 per Annum,* the Tythes, and all the liberties thereunto belonging to the Church of St. Mary de Helenestow, and the Nuns there; afterwards King Henry II. confirmed the Gift, and the Abbess of Elnestow† claimed at Hertford, before John de Reygate and others, Justices Itenerants, in a *Quo Warranto* brought *Anno* 6 Edward I. by the Grant of Henry III. Soc. Sac. Toll, Them, Infangthef, and Discharge from all Aides, Gelds, Danegelds, Assizes, Hidages, Murders, Pleas, and from all Actions, Plaints, Scutages, Ward-peny, and upon View of the Grant, they were allowed; and whilst they were possess hereof, this Church was re-built, and dedicated to the Honour of the Virgin Mary, the particular Saint of their Monastery; but when the fatal Year of their Dissolution happened, this Rectory came to the Crown, and King Henry VIII. bestowed it upon his own Foundation, dedicated it to the Holy Trinity in Cambridge, to hold of the King in free Socage, as of his Manor of East Greenwich in Kent; and the Master, Fellows, and Scholars of the same College, are the present possessors hereof."

Chauncy also says:—

"This church is situated near the middle of the town. It is a fair building containing in length 153 feet and breadth 67 feet with three fair chancels and north and south aisles, and a square tower about 21 feet diameter in which hang a deep ring of six bells, cast in the year 1689, with a short shaft or spire erected upon the tower; which church was anciently dedicated to the honour of St. Andrew, but as the church of St. Mary the Less in Hertford upon re-building thereof was dedicated to St. John, so this church upon the like occasion was dedicated to the Virgin Mary."

* Money was worth about nine times the value of the present day.

† Elstow, Beds.

The Vicars of Hitchin:—

DIED

1474—Rev. John Sperehawke, M.D.
 1498—Rev. James Hert, B.D.
 1499—Rev. William Clophill
 1570—Rev. Richard Chambers, M.A.
 1593—Rev. Alured Birtbye
 1603—Rev. John Hudleston
 1620—Rev. Stephen Pierce, D.D.
 1636—Rev. William Lindall, D.D.
 1644—Rev. Benjamin King
 1660—Rev. Thomas Kinder, M.A.

DIED

—Rev. Thos. Johnson, M.A.
 1679—Rev. William Gibbs, M.A.
 1690—Rev. Francis Bragge, B.D.
 1729—Rev. William Fletcher
 1755—Rev. Mark Hildesley
 1788—Rev. John P. Morgan
 1794—Rev. William Hodson
 1804—Rev. John Rippon
 1821—Rev. Joshua Ruddock
 1856—Rev. Henry Wiles, M.A.

The Font is a piece of rare antiquity, and has been very elegant; effigies of the twelve apostles are sculptured round it in niches. It formerly stood raised upon three steps, but these, about eighty or ninety years ago, were taken away. The living is a vicarage, annual value £650 with residence, in the gift of Trinity College, and at present held by the Rev. L. Hensley, M.A. James Allen is the Parish Clerk, and William Allen now fills the office of Beadle. A few years since the work of restoration was commenced—the whole of the nave having been restored, and also the belfry, and new open seats, constructed of oak, replaced the old-fashioned pews throughout the building. A handsome memorial window is inserted in the west end of the church to the late Frederick Hawkins, Esq., M.D. A new organ, built by Messrs. Walker and Sons, of London, from plans prepared by W. Carling, Mus. Bac., Oxon., (submitted and highly approved by Sir F. G. Ouseley, Bart.,) was opened on the 8th of June, 1871; Dr. Stainer, of Magdalene College, Oxford, presided on the occasion. The organ has three complete manuals, compass of each from CC to A in Alto, fifty-eight notes; and pedal organ, compass CCC to F Tenor, thirty notes; and the pneumatic levers applied to the great organ and couplers. Many handsome monuments are in the church, several in the south chancel being to the Radcliffe family. The whole of the exterior is embattled and ornamented with tasteful pinnacles; the south porch calls forth the admiration of every antiquary who views it, being a fine specimen of ancient architecture, and decorated outside and inside with singular devices, among which, on the outside, is one of those curious and rare sculptured attempts to represent the Holy Trinity. It exhibits three persons, at the feet

of whom are a man and woman in the attitude of prayer, by them lies an open book.

There are eight bells in the tower, and bear the following inscriptions:—

1st and 2nd—

At proper times my voice I'll raise
And sound to my subscribers' praise.—Sep. 24, 1762.

3rd and 7th—

J. M. Pierson, John Everitt, John Collison, Churchwardens.
Rev. J. P. Morgan, Vicar.

4th—

We the sacred nuptial tie joyous proclaim :
And every sound, and every varied peal
Calls smiles of transport from the happy pair.—A.D. 1762.

5th—

*Laudo Deum verum : plebem voco : congreco clerum :
Defunctos ploro : pestem fugo : festa decoro.—1762.

6th—

Joseph Eayre, St. Neots, cast us all eight A.D. 1762.
†Omni pndant gloriam Dei.

8th—

I to church the living call
And to the grave do summon all.

Rev. J. P. Morgan, Vicar.

Wm. Chapman, }
Wm. Powers, } Churchwardens.
Thos. Goodman, }

Edward Arnold, St. Neots, fecit 1784.

On a Tablet that was fixed in the ringer's loft, until the late restoration, is the following:—

On Wednesday, February 20th, 1782, was rung a compleat Peal of 5040 plain bob Triples in 3 hours and 28 minutes, by the ringers of this town:—

- 1 John Jeeves
- 2 Isaac Spencer
- 3 William Eastwicke
- 4 John Waters
- 5 Francis Corrie
- 6 Philip Allen
- 7 Charles Rumball
- 8 Richard Morgan.

On the south side of the tower is placed a sundial on which is written "Anno Salutis, 1660."

* I praise the true God : I summon the common people : I assemble the clergy :
I lament the dead : I repel pestilence : I adorn the feasts.

† Let all things be done to the glory of God.

A local historian, after having copied the various monuments in the church, concludes with the following reflections :—

“I cannot pass over this receptacle of the dead without indulging in a few serious remarks on the instability of human life. We have here handed down to us the characters of many illustrious and shining men remarkable for their piety, benevolence, and charity ; blest with wealth, talents, and power. In others, their private virtues as Christians are depicted, as examples to future ages ; while others, well deserving praise have no record of their goodness to the poor inscribed to their memory, but their ‘works do follow them,’ as the benefactions hereinafter recited will evidently prove. Such is man ‘that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more.’ We tread beneath our feet as we pass along within these sacred walls the ashes of many of our deceased friends, without perhaps, one solitary thought, that we, like them, may soon become a heap of dust. Then let us pause a few moments and consider what we are ! Is it for us, then, to hold up our heads in conscious pride and scorn the lowly part of the creation, which, perchance, may creep before us, and whose worth, in the sight of the Creator, may outvie ours ? Let not pride, that bane of society, swell our breasts, because we enjoy this world’s goods. Rather let our thoughts be fixed on Him who can give or take away as it seemeth Him best. Rather let us call to mind the words of the Prophet Micah, who says : ‘He hath shewn thee, O man, what is good ; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with God ?’ This let us endeavour to practice, and then may we, as well as those whom we have in these pages recorded, look forward with hope to the end of all our wishes, a happy termination to our earthly career, and a glorious resurrection in the world to come.”

ST. SAVIOUR'S CHURCH.

A few years since the Rev. G. Gainsford, to meet the requirements of the increasing population near the Railway Station, built this church, at his own expense, which is capable of seating four hundred persons. It was consecrated by the Bishop of Rochester on Ascension-Day, 1865, and by an order of the Queen in Council a separate Ecclesiastical District was attached to it. A fine-toned organ, built by Walker, of London, was presented by Miss Gainsford, sister of the incumbent, and two very handsome stained glass memorial windows have been placed in the church. The Rev. G. Gainsford is patron and incumbent.

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST'S MISSION CHAPEL.

This building, situated on Hitchin Hill, was occupied for many years by the Particular Baptists ; during which time it was known as “Bull’s Barn,” or “Bethel Chapel.”

Being private property, it was put up to auction and sold in the latter part of 1868. The present owner, C. W. Wilshire, Esq., has had it repaired, and it is used for mission services, sermons, &c., with permission of the Bishop; the vicar and curates of the parish officiating.

TILEHOUSE STREET CHAPEL.

This chapel, which is now usually called "Salem Chapel," is one of the most interesting Dissenting places of worship in this county. There is a chair still in the vestry which was given by the author of "Pilgrim's Progress." The foundation stone of the Old Meeting House was laid in 1692, and that building lasted until 1844, when the present chapel was erected. The first pastor appointed here was Mr. John Wilson, who was a member of the Old Meeting at Bedford, of which John Bunyan was the pastor. There is a good Sunday School, where about three hundred children attend. A few years since a very handsome organ was erected by Walker & Sons, of London. Mr. George Halsey fulfils the duties of organist.

From a small work, entitled "Brief Outline of the Tilehouse Street Chapel, Hitchin," we quote the following:—

The church covenanted together in brother Field's house, Hitchin, in 1681, and was founded on the liberal plan of admitting Pædobaptists into their society. But many years before that, as far back as 1666, if not before, there was preaching in Wain Wood, near Preston Castle Farm.*

The first pastor was Mr. John Wilson, who was a member of the Old Meeting at Bedford, of which John Bunyan, author of the "Pilgrim's Progress," and many other valuable works, was the pastor. There is a letter of dismission from the church at Bedford to the church at Hitchin, with an honourable testimony to Mr. Wilson from that church; he was ordained as pastor over this church the 28th day of April, 1677, and was so for more than forty years. In that period he suffered persecution for some considerable time, and was imprisoned in Hertford gaol; he laboured under many infirmities, and for the last twenty years of his life was often incapacitated for labour. For several years, through a paralytic stroke, he was conveyed to chapel in a chair. He died at Bull Corner, about the year 1717, and was buried near the pulpit, beneath the table-pew of the Old Meeting. The first folio edition of Bunyan's works was prefaced by this Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Chandler, of Bedford, Bunyan's successor.

Mr. John Needham came as an assistant to Mr. Wilson, in 1705, and after about four years he was unanimously called to be joint pastor,

* See Preston Castle Farm.

January 29th, 1709, in which capacity he continued till Mr. Wilson's death. Altogether, he was their affectionate pastor thirty-seven years. He was held in high estimation by the church and congregation, as the stone over his grave bears ample testimony. He died about the year 1746, at Bull Corner, and was buried in the cross aisle nearest to the vestry of the Old Meeting.

Mr. Samuel James was the successor of Mr. Needham, and married one of his daughters. He was an excellent preacher, and much esteemed by his flock; he was their pastor more than thirty years. He died also at Bull Corner, in the same house as both his predecessors, August 22nd, 1773, aged fifty-seven years, and was buried in a vault in the grave-yard adjoining the Old Meeting, where there is a tomb erected to his memory. During his ministry the meeting was enlarged. His successor, Mr. John Geard, thus writes, "There was not a dissenting voice in the choice of either of my predecessors, nor of myself."

Mr. John Geard succeeded Mr. James. He had been a student at the Bristol Academy, and came to Hitchin, on probation, in 1774, and in the following year received the unanimous invitation of the church to become their pastor, which he accepted, and was ordained April 14th, 1775, (the same month as Mr. Wilson, ninety-eight years before).

Mr. Geard died November 20th, 1838, being in his eighty-ninth year, having been pastor fifty-seven years.

In 1829, Mr. Joshua Gray, son of Mr. Gray, of Northampton, who was at that time a student at Bristol, was invited for six months on probation, to assist Mr. Geard; at the expiration of which time, the Church not being unanimous, he left; when Mr. Isaac Mann informed the deacons that Mr. Thomas Griffin was about giving up his charge in Prescott Street, London, and recommended him as one suitable to fill the sacred office. An invitation was given him for three sabbaths, when the Church consulted and unanimously agreed to invite him to become their pastor, which he accepted, entering on his ministerial labours about Midsummer, 1830.

Mr. Griffin remained about ten years and was succeeded by the Rev. John Broad, who had resigned his office as pastor of the Baptist Church, at Kensington. He entered upon his office in 1841, and continued the pastor of this church until November, 1857, when he resigned, and was succeeded by the Rev. George Short, who entered upon his office in 1859, and continued the pastorate until June, 1868, when, he resigned and removed to Salisbury, and was succeeded by the Rev. John Aldis, jun., the present pastor.

QUEEN STREET CHAPEL.

This Chapel belongs to the Congregationalists or Independents, and is a modern edifice, having been re-erected in 1855.

On the north-east corner of the present premises, the first place of worship, belonging exclusively to the Independents of this town, was built.

The date of the certificate of register in the Archdeacon's Court is April 26th, 1690.

The earliest mention of the existence of Nonconformists in Hitchin dates back some years prior to this.

Dr. Owen, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, in the times of the Commonwealth, wrote to the congregation at Hitchin. It appears, from his letter, dated March 18th, 1669, that the congregation, though very small, had existed for some time.

The trustees of the first chapel were Messrs. George Wilkinson and Thomas Hitchin.

The first name in the list of the Church Members is that of Edward Hitchin. He was a prominent man, and the author of an important document, adopted by the Church on its reconstitution, in October, 1715.

The first settled Minister of the Church was the Rev. Thomas Scott, who afterwards removed to Norwich, where he lived for some years as pastor of the Independent Church.

On the 6th of November, 1703, Thomas Hitchin surrendered the trust of the chapel property to Thomas Scott, Gent., of Hitchin, and four others. The next surrender was on the 23rd August, 1740. Thomas Scott, who is described as of the city of Norwich, gentleman, and who seems to have been the survivor of a body of trustees, appointed John Creasey of Gosmore, yeoman, his attorney, to surrender the premises to new trustees.

John Hutchinson, B.A., Fellow Trinity College, Cambridge, a physician, resided at Hitchin from about 1674 to 1704. He was a zealous preacher amongst the Nonconformists.

Rev. Thomas Wright succeeded Mr. Scott on his withdrawal to Norwich.

After three other ministers in succession, came the Rev. James Webb, who remained in office for twenty years.

The Rev. Edward Hickman was the next pastor in succession. During his Ministry, Mr. William Wilshire was appointed by the Church to the office of Deacon. In course of time others were chosen to be his co-adjutors.

Mr. Hickman removed in 1771, and his place was filled by the Rev. John Griffiths. He remained the minister of the church until his death in 1796.

The Rev. William Williams, of Homerton College, was ordained pastor in the September of 1795. He appears to have been instrumental in drawing some influential families to the congregation. He died in 1817, and was buried in the grave-yard adjoining the chapel.

For the ensuing twelve years, the Rev. Charles Sloper was minister of the church.

The Rev. John William Wayne succeeded. He came from Newport Pagnell College. He continued minister for twenty years.

The next pastor of the Church was the Rev. F. W. Heathcote. He removed to this post from Stonehouse, Plymouth, and began his ministry here in July, 1846. He was educated at Spring Hill College, Birmingham.

The Rev. William Griffith followed. Like his predecessor, he was a student of Spring Hill College, Birmingham.

During the Rev. W. Griffith's ministry, the present handsome Chapel was founded and completed. It was

opened for public worship on the 10th of April, 1856. It occupies a commanding site, and its interior arrangements are such that gives it a light and graceful appearance. A capital organ is erected in the gallery. A school-room, class-rooms, &c., have been recently erected on the site of the old chapel, at a cost of more than £1,300, in which the Sunday School is held. Upwards of three hundred children receive instruction here. The present pastor, the Rev. S. B. Driver, of the Lancashire College, Manchester, was ordained, March 17th, 1870.

WESLEYAN CHAPEL.

This Chapel is situate in Brand Street. The exact date when the Wesleyans first established themselves in this town has not been obtained, but it is believed to be about 1829. The services were then held in a large room in Bancroft; after which they were conducted at the residence of Mr. Thorndike, an excise officer, who lived in the house now occupied by Mr. Goodchild, at the bottom of Tilehouse Street; after this time two cottages situate in Pound Lane, now called Brand Street, and belonging to Mr. Eliman, a tailor, were converted into a place of worship. This building, with the yard surrounding it, formed the site of the present chapel. There is a Sunday School for boys and girls, which is well attended. The Revs. James Bunting and Thomas Hackett are the present ministers appointed by the Wesleyan conference.

MOUNT ZION CHAPEL.

This place of worship is used by the Particular Baptists. It was erected in 1859. The congregation are a portion of the church who formerly worshipped at Bethel Chapel, Hitchin Hill, but divided a year or so previous to the erection of this building. It is very pleasantly situated in Park Street. There is a Sunday School, where about sixty children attend. Mr. Tucker at present is the appointed minister.

BETHEL CHAPEL.

This building is situated in Queen Street, and was erected in the year 1870. The congregation are Particular Baptists, who formerly worshipped at the Bethel Chapel, Hitchin

Hill, until that building was sold. The present minister is Mr. W. Morris.

In "The Riches of Free Grace," by Thomas Oxenham, published at Sleaford, 1821, at page 27, he says :—

"About this time (1820) several friends who came from Hitchin pretty constantly to hear me, a distance of nine miles, requested me to preach an evening lecture on the Lord's day, once a month, at a place called Trunk's House, about two miles this side of Hitchin.* The house and barn had been licensed. To which I agreed, and accordingly went many times. * * * One of the farmers whose name is B—— was an excellent player on the flute. He came with the other farmers into the body of the place, and at a certain time was to take out his flute and to begin playing 'God save the King,' whilst a number of their servants and others, who were stationed outside, were immediately to commence singing in the front of me * * * but the man who was to have begun the disturbance, God so forcibly struck with the word of truth, that when his neighbour pulled him by the lappet of his coat and whispered to him to begin, he has since declared that he had no power whatever to move * * * since that time he has often assisted in carrying on the worship at Hitchin by raising the tunes for us. * * * After having preached for some time at this place, a cottage, barn, and small field close to Hitchin was to be sold, of which the friends informed me, and as the poor woman at Trunk's house was about leaving, I purchased them, and the Spring following pulled down the old barn and erected a brick meeting house."

BAPTIST CHAPEL, WALSWORTH ROAD.

This being a new district created by the opening of the several railways which run into the Hitchin Station, Mr. Johnson, engineer on the Great Northern Railway, erected, at his own cost, an iron building, which was called "The Mission Hall." The congregation having rapidly increased a Baptist church was formed in July, 1869. There is also a Sunday School. The Rev. J. H. Atkinson is the pastor of the church.

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

The Society of Friends appear to have existed in this town and neighbourhood from almost the earliest times of the Society. The following is copied from "Besse's Sufferings of the Society of Friends," folio edition, vol. i, page 240, under the date of 1657 :—

Edward Brocket, of Hitchin, for not paying tithes was imprisoned for nine weeks, and George Huckle for refusing to pay the priest's demands for Easter Offerings and Smoke-money was prosecuted in the Exchequer,

* This is the house just beyond Chapel Foot.

and committed to prison, where he continued about two years. In this year also, goods were taken from several persons to the value of £3 14s. 3d. for demands of £1 8s. 1d. for repairing the Steeple House.*

Under the date of 1660, page 241 :—

In this year the Oath of Allegiance was tendered to many of this people, who being taken at their meetings, and conscientiously refusing to swear, were sent to prison on the 13th of the month called January, a constable with many rude attendants rushed into the meeting at Baldock, and after many blows and abuses forcibly dragged out: Thomas Burr, William Burt, jun., Richard Laundry, John Izzard, Jeremy Laundry, Thomas Baldock, Thomas Scales, Edward Crouch, John Bennett, Thomas Petchett, Anthony Bennett, Thomas Morse, Michael Phillips, James Caudell, sen., Daniel Kirk, James Caudell, jun., and John Passel, whom they kept all night at an inn without beds, and next day carried them to Hertford, where they were permitted to have lodging; but about midnight were taken out of their beds, and by warrant from two justices committed to the county gaol for refusing to swear, and William Burr, sen., was sent thither next day by another justice for the same cause. On the 20th Robert Fairman, Graveley Whittingtall, Francis Field, Widow Ann Brocket, Dorothy Gurney, and Francis Huckle were taken from a Meeting at Hitchin, and were the next day committed to prison for refusing the oaths.

Under the date 1661, page 242 :—

In this year also, George Huckle, of Hitchin, was committed to prison, where he lay several years, at the suit of Thomas Kinder, priest, who had prosecuted him in the Exchequer, out of mere malice, exhibiting in his bill a pretended claim for tithes of a cow and calf, geese, hens, ducks, and other pulhen, though the man held no land nor had anything tithable, but the priest resolved to imprison his neighbour, charged what he pleased, knowing that he could not disprove anything nor be admitted to answer but upon oath.

Under the date 1670, page 249 :—

On the 19th of the month called June, Justice Radcliffe came to the Meeting at Hitchin and said: "I hope you will not deny that this is a religious assembly," repeating the same words several times. One present answered: "It is a religious meeting." He replied, "That's enough!" and gave his warrant to distrain for twenty pounds; to levy which the officers broke open the doors of Frances Field, widow, and took away goods worth £10, which they sold for forty shillings; they also took for part of the same fine from William Turner, goods to the value of £14, and on the following day from Samuel Crouch, John Barker, John Mansfield, and William Marshall goods worth £1 19s. 0d.

George Fox appears to have visited Hitchin in 1655. In his published journal, folio edition, printed in 1694, page 170, he mentions being at Baldock, under date 1655 :—

"When we came to Baldock, in Hertfordshire, I asked if there was nothing in that town, no profession, and it was answered me, "There

* (Qry.) Staplehouse.

were some Baptists, and a Baptist woman sick." John Rush, of Bedfordshire, went along with me to visit her, and when we came in there were many people in the house that were tender about her, and they told me she was not a woman for this world, but if I had anything to comfort her concerning the world to come I might speak to her. So I was moved of the Lord God to her, and the Lord raised her up again to the astonishment of the town and country. Her husband's name was Baldock. This Baptist woman and her husband came to be convinced and many hundreds of people have been at meetings at their house since. Great meetings and convincements there were up and down in those parts afterwards and many people received the Word of Life, and sat down under the teachings of Christ their Saviour.

When we had visited this sick woman we went back to our inn and there were two desperate fellows fighting so furiously that none durst come nigh to part them, but I was moved in the Lord's power to go to them, and when I had loosed their hands, I held one of them by one hand and the other by the other hand and I showed them the evil of their doings and reconciled them one to the other, that they were loving and very thankful to me, so that people admired at it.

The present Meeting House was built in 1839, and is situate at the top of Brand Street, on a piece of ground given by the late Joseph Sharples, Esq. On the opposite side of the road is the Burying Ground, which was first used for that purpose about the year 1718, and the brick wall built round it in 1725. Previous to the year 1718 the funerals of the Society of Friends at Hitchin and the surrounding villages took place in a Burying Ground at St. Ibbes, immediately beyond the house now occupied by Mrs. Hale, and upwards of two hundred and twenty bodies are interred in this ground. It was last used in 1789—George Chalkley Taylor, of Breachwood Green, having directed in his Will that his body should be interred there. This ground was disposed of about the year 1815 to the late Sir Francis Willes, on the condition that it should be planted with evergreens and trees and not used for agricultural purposes.

THE CEMETERY.

Although not strictly speaking a place of divine worship, the Cemetery claims our notice under the present chapter from the solemn and sacred character of the purpose to which it is set apart,—the burial of the dead.

The Cemetery is pleasantly situated on Highbury, on the east side of the town. It was opened on the 3rd of May, 1857, and the church portion consecrated by 'the Lord

Bishop of Rochester. The entrance to the Cemetery is by Hitchin Hill, Highbury Road, and Park Street through the Sand Dells. The chapels are nearly in the centre of the ground.

The Cemetery will, doubtless, be a favorite resort of those who love the tranquil retreat that forms the abode of the dead. Notwithstanding the melancholy interest that attaches to the spot—it may be visited with pleasure. Its walks are neatly kept; the beauty of its situation, and the extent of view around, rendering it an additional adornment to the town and neighbourhood. J. G. Hawkins, Esq., is the Clerk and Registrar to the Burial Board, and T. Fells is the Lodge Keeper and Sexton.

Schools.

FREE GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

This School is situate at the top of Tilehouse Street. On a stone tablet over the entrance gate to the house is recorded the following:—"This Free School House was begun to be built by voluntary contribution in the year 1640, and finished by Ralph Skynner, Gent, 1678; and the school was endowed at divers times by the following benefactors—John Mattocke, Esq., Edward Radcliffe, Esq., Joseph Kemp, Clerk, John Skynner, Thomas Honeylove, Ralph Skynner, Gent., Thomas Kinder, Clerk, William Dawes, Citizen and Currier, of London; Joseph Margetts Pierson, and John Davis. This house was erected as a Free School for the teaching and training up the children of the inhabitants of Hitchin, in good literature and virtuous education by the Master, who is to be appointed by the Trustees for the time being."

MASTERS.

1718—James Lawrence
1742—John Lyle
1750—William Snell

1779—William Reynolds
1820—Rev. Jos. White Niblock
1832—William Hopgood.

Mr. John Sugars is the present master.

ST. MARY'S NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

This building is situate near the Churchyard and consists of Boys, Girls, and Infant School-rooms, with Class-rooms, &c. The Master's and Mistress' residences adjoin. The Vicar has the superintendence of the schools. A tablet with the following inscription, is affixed to the wall of the central room, viz:—"These Schools, with the residences adjoining, were erected in the year 1854, during the incumbency of the Rev. H. Wiles, principally through the exertions of the Rev. John Francis Stuart, M.A., who was then curate of the parish." The ground was presented by Trinity College, Cambridge; and the expenses, amounting to £4,020, were defrayed from the following sources:—

	£	s.	d.
Voluntary Subscriptions	2160	0	0
The Committee of Council	1540	0	0
The National Society	190	0	0
The Diocesan Society	80	0	0
The Cholmondeley Charity	50	0	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£4020	0	0

The present Master is Mr. Must, and the Mistresses are Miss Thier and Miss Bennett.

Round the outside of the buildings, about three and five feet from the basement, the following texts of scripture are inserted in a running line of entablature bricks:—

Round the School—"Fear God," "1 Peter iii. 17," "According to the grace of God, which is given unto me as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon;" "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ;" "Ye are the children of the Lord your God;" "Sin not;" "Wisdom hath builded her house: whoso is simple, let him turn in hither." "Seek peace;" "Give in grace;" Honour the king." The texts round the Residences are—"Except the Lord build the house, thy labour is in vain that buildeth;" "Lo! children are an heritage of the Lord;" "Thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do;" That our sons may grow up as the young plants, and that our daughters may be as the polished corners of the temple;" "Come ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord."

BRITISH SCHOOLS.

These Schools are in Queen Street; they afford accommodation for nearly six hundred children and are well

fitted. New Buildings for Girls and Infants, fronting the street, were erected in 1857. The Boys' School was founded in 1810 by the late William Wilshere, Esq., of Hitchin, who bequeathed property producing an endowment of about £100 a year. In the main room, which is the largest in the town, there hangs an oil portrait of the founder with an appropriate inscription. Mr. W. J. Fitch is Master of the Boys' School. Miss Moore is Mistress of the Girls' School. Miss Bridgeman is Mistress of the Infants' School. The present set of buildings may be said to owe its existence to the unwearied exertions of our good townsman Mr. John Thompson.

ST. ANDREW'S SCHOOL.

This School, standing upon ground given by C. W. Wilshere, Esq., is situate in St. Andrew's Street, a very poor locality. The object of the founder was to make it a school where the children may learn to plait and the first rudiments of education at the same time. On a tablet, in the interior, is the following inscription:—

“Erected mainly through the exertions of the Rev. George Gainsford, Curate of this Parish, MDCCCLIV., Rev. H. Wiles, Vicar.”

The School Room is also used for public worship on Sunday evenings.

ST. SAVIOUR'S SCHOOL.

There is a Day-school for Boys, Girls, and Infants; which is well attended. Schoolmistress: Miss Hyder. A Sunday School is held in the room; and the Foresters hold their monthly meetings here.

WALSWORTH SCHOOLS.

Nearly opposite the Foot Bridge stands a School with Mistress's House, built by the late Mrs. Exton; the land having been given by W. Wilshere, Esq. It is endowed with £1,000 under Mrs. Hailey's Will, which sum is invested in the names of twelve trustees. Miss Kempester is the present Mistress.

SUNNY-SIDE SCHOOL.

A School for the Children residing at The Folly and neighbourhood was established some years since by the late Mrs. Peckover. Mrs. Bulpitt is the present Mistress.

ADULT SCHOOLS.

A School for Male Adults has been established by the Society of Friends and is held at the British School every Sunday. Upwards of three hundred scholars attend. In connection with this School there are Singing and Elocution Classes. The Members give concerts and readings during the winter. There is also an Adult School for Females, which is held in the Workmen's Hall, Brand Street, every Sunday. There are also Adult Classes, both for men and women, held at S. Saviour's Orphanage every Sunday.

Charitable Institutions.

JOHN SKYNNER'S ALMSHOUSES.

At the bottom of Bancroft are sixteen Almshouses, eight of which were founded by John Skynner, and erected at a cost of £271 upon a piece of ground called "Benn's Mead," which was granted by Sir Thomas Byde for that purpose. The following is the copy of an inscription over the entrance gate nearest the town:—

To God and the Poor
Was this Building dedicated by
JOHN SKYNNER, GENT.,

To support which he piously gave Three Hundred Pounds to purchase Land for a perpetual endowment of these Houses, and his Orchard, next the Churchyard, to keep them in repair.

1668.

He likewise left £100 to be expended in the instruction of the children of this town; £100 to be employed in placing ten boys as apprentices; and £10 to be distributed amongst the poor at his death.

RALPH SKYNNER'S ALMSHOUSES.

Ralph Skynner, by his Will, dated the 19th day of May, 1699, gave £400 for building eight almshouses for poor old impotent people of Hitchin, near the almshouses of his brother's gift, directing his executors to pay for the ground on which they should be built, and he gave £400 more for

purchasing land for a revenue of his said almshouses. The following is a copy of an inscription over the entrance gate nearest to the Police Station :—

(1698)

Blessed are ye dead which die in ye Lord ; they rest from their labours,
their works do follow them ; of which happy number was

RALPH SKYNNER, GENTLEMAN,

who died in June, 1697,

Who left £800 to build and endow these Dwellings for the Poor ; nor
was his charity confined to this parish only, but other Parishes did
experience the same which yet prevented not in any large gifts of
kindness to his own Relations.

Blessed be God for so great an example of Free Charity and Goodness ;
and it is but just that the thus righteous be had in everlasting remem-
brance.

By the care of { Edward Lawndy, }
 { John Papworth, } his Executors.
 { Edward Draper, }

This Building was begun and finished in the year of our Lord
1698.

DANIEL WARNER'S ALMSHOUSES.

There are Six Almshouses situate on the south-east corner of the Churchyard of Hitchin, which were originally parish houses for the habitation of the poor, and in the disposition of the churchwardens and overseers, but having become decayed and ruinous, they were in the year 1761 re-built at the cost and charge of Daniel Warner. On the gable end of the house nearest the church gate is the following inscription :—

Sept. the 15th, 1760, these Six Houses were pulled down and re-built at the cost and charge of Daniel Warner, Turner, of this Town, in his lifetime ; for the warmer and better comfort of the poorer Widows or Ancient Couples of this Town ; hoping that some of a bigger fortune may be inclined to add something more for the better support of these poor, that cannot help themselves.

ELIZABETH SIMPSON'S ALMSHOUSES.

In 1773 Elizabeth Simpson gave five cottages, situate in Biggin Lane, unto William Wilshere and seven other trustees, "For the use of such and so many poor persons being Protestant Dissenters who from time to time shall continue to attend Divine Service in the Meeting House set apart for Divine Worship situate in Back Street, called the Independent Meeting House ;" and gave a further sum

of £100 for a fund to pay all necessary expenses. In 1798, by her Will she also gave £333 6s. 8d. to the trustees to pay the interest thereof equally between the inhabitants of the said five houses.

ST. SAVIOUR'S ALMSHOUSES.

Nearly opposite St. Saviour's Church Six Almshouses have been erected, the cost of which has been met by subscription. They are intended for the accommodation of men and women—married or single.

ST. SAVIOUR'S ORPHANAGE.

Adjoining the Almshouses stands the Orphanage. This building is intended for twelve orphan girls, which is the number it at present contains, under the care of one of the Sisters of St. Margaret's, East Grinstead. It is supported by the contributions of the friends and patrons of the children, and of other charitably disposed persons. The Orphanage received the Benediction of the Bishop of the Diocese in June, 1873, when it was opened.

THE INFIRMARY.

This noble Institution, built in 1840, supported by endowments and voluntary subscriptions, stands north-west of the town on the Bedford Road. For many years before its establishment the late F. Hawkins, Esq., M.D., hired a cottage, where he gave advice and medicines to the poor of the town and neighbourhood. Contributions for the support of this formed a nucleus for the present charity. Every annual subscriber of two guineas and upwards is a governor and entitled to send two in and four out patients. O. Foster, R. R. Shillitoe, R. Shillitoe, and C. J. Grellet, Esqrs., and Dr. O. H. Foster, are the medical attendants, whose services are gratuitous. J. H. Tuke, Esq., treasurer, and Samuel Lucas, Esq., hon. secretary. Mrs. Greet is the matron and Mr. Bombroffe the dispenser.

SOCIETY FOR BETTERING THE CONDITION OF THE POOR.

This Society was established forty-two years ago for the purpose of Bettering the Condition of the Poor by District Visiting, Garden Allotments, &c. It has been continued

to this date with great success. Messrs. S. Wright and S. Lucas are the present collectors.

Literary Institutions, &c.

MECHANICS' INSTITUTION & PUBLIC LIBRARY.

The Mechanics' Institute was established in 1835. When first opened the members occupied the house at the top of Brand Street, but now, and for many years past, they have occupied rooms in the Town Hall. In 1861 the New Library was built, at a cost of about £500, when the books belonging to the Public Library and also the Friends' Library were removed there. The Library consists of upwards of 6,000 volumes. The Rev. L. Hensley, M.A., (the vicar,) is the president. There are thirteen vice-presidents. Joseph Pollard, Esq., is the treasurer; Mr. F. Warr, the secretary; and Mr. Henry Worsley, the librarian.

PATERNOSTER'S LIBRARY & READING ROOM.

This is an old-established Subscription Library situate in Sun Street, opposite the Sun Hotel. A subscriber of one guinea per annum, commencing at any time, is entitled to the use of the Reading Room and News Room, which are open from nine o'clock in the morning until eight in the evening.

The Morning and Evening Papers and the County Papers are taken; also the most popular Magazines and Reviews of the day.

A large collection of the Newest Works of acknowledged merit and general interest in History, Biography, Travel, and Adventure, and the higher class of Fiction.

Religious Institutions.

BIBLE SOCIETY.

This Auxiliary was established in 1811. The total number of Bibles, Testaments, Psalters, and Parts distributed by

this Auxiliary up to the Annual Meeting, 1873, is 50,524. Mr. Joseph Pollard and the Rev. S. B. Driver are the secretaries, and Mr. John Thompson is the depository.

LADIES' BIBLE ASSOCIATION.

In 1819 this Association was established. Since its commencement 3643 Bibles and Testaments have been distributed by its agency. Mrs. W. Lucas is the treasurer, and Mrs. O. Foster the secretary.

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

This Society has had for many years a Depository in this Town, and a large number of its publications are annually disposed of. The Depository is at Paternoster and Hales' Bookselling Establishment, Sun Street.

TRACT SOCIETY.

This Society has a Depository at Mr. John Palmer's Bookselling Establishment, High Street, where the whole of the publications of the Society may be obtained.

Boarding and Day Schools.

There is a good Commercial Academy here conducted by Mr. Durrant. The object of this School is to impart a practical education preparatory to the active duties of professional, agricultural, and commercial life. The residence is situate in Bancroft. Besides the education imparted the scholars are regularly drilled by a military man, and a Drum and Fife Band has been formed amongst the scholars. There are upwards of 80 pupils.

The Rev. J. Comfort conducts a Classical and Commercial School where the pupils can obtain a good education. The residence is situate in a most healthy part of the town, on the Bedford Road, opposite the recreation ground (Butt's Close).

The house and grounds for many years occupied by the late Joseph Sharples, Esq., were taken for the purposes of a Boys' Boarding School, in the Summer of 1873, by Messrs. J. P. Drewett and C. Woodhead. The School now consists of about thirty Boarders; and is attended by Professor Leunheim, of Kensington, as teacher of foreign languages, and by Mr. Robert Hales, of New Cross, as drawing master.

Ladies' Seminaries.

There is a large Ladies' School in Sun Street, conducted by Miss Geard.

Miss Hudson has also a good old-established Ladies' School. The residence is situate at the bottom of Bancroft.

There are other Schools for Young Ladies.

Public Buildings.

TOWN HALL.

This Hall is a noble-looking building situate in Brand Street. Although it is called the "Town Hall," it is private property, having been built by a company. The charge for the large Hall, which will hold about four hundred persons, is 29s. per night, including gas. The Secretary to the Company is Mr. William Carling, and the Hall Keeper is Mr. Henry Worsley. The Petty Sessions of this Division are held here every Tuesday. William Hawkins, Esq., is the magistrates' clerk. The Board of Guardians have a room here, where the Board Meetings are held. W. Lucas, Esq., is the chairman; W. Ransom, Esq., the vice-chairman; and Mr. G. A. Passingham the clerk. The County Court for this district is held in the large Hall bi-monthly. J. T. Abdy, Esq., judge; J. G. Hawkins, Esq., registrar; Mr. G. C. King, assistant bailiff.

CORN EXCHANGE.

On the west side of the Market Square, in a line with High Street and Bucklersbury, stands the Corn Exchange, the property of the Market Company. It is a handsome building, and suitable for the purposes for which it was erected. A large amount of business in corn is done here on Tuesdays. Mr. Malden is the Collector and Secretary. In the Board room over the entrance is a very handsome picture, representing "the Market Place in the olden time," painted by the late Samuel Lucas, Esq.

WORKMAN'S HALL.

This Hall was erected in Brand Street in 1868. It contains a Lecture Hall, capable of holding upwards of three hundred persons, with a class-room over. In the front of the building, adjoining the street, there is an eating-house and coffee-rooms for the use of the members, who pay a small subscription. The daily papers are taken in, and on the first floor is a bagatelle room in which the members may indulge the habit of smoking. No intoxicating drinks are admitted on the premises. Mr. Henry Aylot is the hall-keeper.

PLAIT MART.

In 1874 Mr. C. A. Bartlett erected, at the corner of St. Andrew's Street, a substantial brick-built Plait Mart and Service Room. The building covers about 800 square feet, and was built by Mr. William Butterfield, bricklayer and mason, and Mr. W. Seymour, carpenter and builder. On the ground floor is the Plait Hall, which is 22ft. by 28ft. A practical man manages this portion of the establishment, and the full market value of the plait is given. No plait is bought from children under fourteen years of age. The Service Room is approached from St. Andrew's Street, and is reached by a flight of stone steps. There is little or no ornamentation, but the room is lofty, well ventilated, and answers the purpose for which it is intended. There is a platform with a desk in front for the speakers and the choir. Services are held here on Sundays. The Service Room and Plait Mart were opened, the former on Sunday, August 2nd, and the latter on the following Wednesday. The Mart is open from three to five p.m. daily.

Provident Institutions, Benefit Societies, &c.

HITCHIN FRIENDLY INSTITUTION.

Of the many Institutions for relief in sickness which are established in Hitchin, none have been more successfully conducted than this one. It was established in 1827, by John Hawkins, Esq., who continues to give it his support. The present number of members is about 320, and the amount of capital £15,775 12s. 3d., which has been computed by the most eminent actuaries to be sufficient to meet every call that can legally be made upon it by the Members, and a surplus amounting to £2897 17s. 2d. remaining; an amount which many societies, with the same number of members, would pride themselves upon if they had an equal sum in stock. Mr. Henry Jeeves is the secretary, pro. tem.

FREEMASONS.

There is a Lodge of Freemasons here, who hold their meetings at the Sun Hotel. The Lodge is called "Cecil Lodge," after the name of one of its early members, the late Lord Salisbury. Mr. John Sugars is the secretary.

ODD FELLOWS.

There is a branch of the Manchester Unity established here. The Lodge is called the "Loyal Albert." There are at present one hundred and fifty members, and at the last annual meeting (July, 1874,) their stock amounted to £1,710 16s. 11d. The Lodge Meetings are held at the Crown Inn. Mr. William Griggs is the secretary.

FORESTERS.

The Order of Foresters established a Court here a few years since, which is called "Future King," and number upwards of one hundred and fifty members. The Monthly Courts are held in St. Saviour's School Room. Mr. James Day is the secretary.

ORDER OF FREE GARDENERS.

There is a branch Court of the Bedford district established here. The meetings are held at the Crown Inn. Mr. J. Smith is the secretary.

HITCHIN FRIENDLY SOCIETY.

This Society was established in 1818. There are at present one hundred and sixty-three members, with a capital of about £2,000. Mr. Lawson Thompson is the treasurer and secretary.

FRIENDS OF LABOUR LOAN ASSOCIATION.

This Association was established for the purpose of assisting the members with small loans, repayable by instalments. The meetings are held fortnightly at the Swan Inn. Mr. W. Gage is the secretary.

ANNUAL PROVIDENT SOCIETY.

This Society, after paying all calls upon it in sickness, &c., divides its remaining stock annually among the members. The Monthly Meetings are held in the Working Men's Reading Room, Back Street. Mr. Henry Worsley is the secretary.

BENEFIT SOCIETY.

This Society has been established about twenty years. There are now upwards of sixty members. The Monthly Meetings are held at the Bricklayer's Arms. Mr. William Huckle is the secretary.

BENEFIT SOCIETY.

This Society was established in 1836, and there are now sixty-six members. A portion of the stock of this Society has been invested in cottage property. The Monthly Meetings are held at the Two Brewers, Back Street. Mr. Thomas Spencer is the secretary.

COAL AND CLOTHING CLUBS.

There are several Coal and Clothing Clubs in the Town; the majority of them are conducted by the clergy, ministers of the different places of worship, and district visitors.

SAVINGS' BANK.

A Savings' Bank has been established here upwards of half a century. The present managers meet every Tuesday at the Town Hall, at ten o'clock. Mr. Joshua Whiting is the secretary.

PENNY BANK.

A Penny Savings' Bank was established here in 1857. The managers meet every Saturday evening at the Working Men's Reading Room, in Back Street. J. H. Tuke, Esq., is the treasurer, and Mr. Wheeler is the secretary.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS' BANK.

The Post Office Savings' Bank has been opened here from nearly the commencement of the system in this country. The office is opened from nine in the morning until six o'clock in the evening.

ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.

The Telegraph Wires are brought into the town, and a station opened at the Post Office, so that every facility is given to the public for communicating with any part by electric telegraph. The office hours are from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Attendance is given on Sundays from 7 to 10 p.m.; Messages may also be sent any time during the day at extra charges.

Miscellaneous.

BANKERS.

Messrs. Sharples, Tuke, Lucas, and Seeböhm are the chief bankers in the town. The London and County Bank have a branch here which is managed by their representative, Mr. H. Flint. Messrs. Hogge, Lindsell, & Co., of Baldock, have also a branch here, which is open only on Tuesdays.

LOCAL BOARD.

A Local Board was established here in 1850, but lapsed in 1859, and since that time until 1873 the town was managed by Committees of Ratepayers. A Board has again been elected and hold their sittings at the large room at the Corn Exchange. T. Dashwood, Esq., is the Chairman, and W. O. Times, Esq., is the Clerk to the Board.

THE POST OFFICE.

The Post Office is on the north side of the Market Square. Mr. John Beaver is the postmaster. The situation of the office is one of great convenience to the public, being in the centre of the business part of the town. Pillar-boxes are erected on Hitchin Hill, Dacre Road (near the Railway Station), and Bedford Road (near Butt's Close Corner). The following are the hours of business at this office, corrected up to the present date:—

The Morning Delivery for Letters from London and all parts by the Night Mails, begins at	A.M. 7. 0
The Second Delivery for Letters from London by the Morning Mail, and by the North Mails, begins at	9.45 P.M.
The Third Delivery from London and through, begins at ..	6. 0
For the Morning Mail to London and through, Letters may be posted till	A.M. 10.30
Letters Registered for this Mail at the ordinary fee of 4d., till ..	10.30
For the Afternoon Mail (<i>via</i> Luton) Letters for the North, Scotland, and Ireland, may be posted till	P.M. 3.30
Ditto, with an additional Stamp, till	3.40
Letters Registered for this Mail at the ordinary fee of 4d., till ..	3.30
London and Forward, Letters may be posted till	4.30
Ditto, with an additional Stamp, till	4.45
Letters Registered for this Mail at the ordinary fee of 4d., till ..	4.30
London and Forward, Letters may be posted till	7.30
Ditto, with an additional Stamp, till	7.40
For the Night Mails, Letters may be posted—	
Cambridge forward	9. 0
On Sundays	7. 0
Registered till	9. 0
Peterborough and York	9.15
Registered till	9. 0
London and Forward	9.30
Ditto, with an additional Stamp, till	10. 0
Registered till	9. 0
Buntingford, Baldock, Cambridge, Hertford, Royston, Stevenage, and Ware	9.30
Ditto, with an additional Stamp, till	10. 0
Registered till	9. 0
On Week Days the Office is Closed for Public Business and Sale of Stamps at	9. 0
On Sundays there is but One Delivery, commencing at	A.M. 7. 0
The Office is Closed for the Sale of Stamps and Registering Letters ..	10. 0

The times given are subject to alteration by the Postmaster General, and cannot safely be relied on.

Connected with the Post Office there is a Money-order Office, which is open from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m.

RAILWAYS—HITCHIN STATION.

The Railways afford great accommodation to travellers, who can go to any part of England from this station. The Great Northern has a first-class station here; the Cambridge Railway, which is leased to the Great Northern Railway Company, runs in here; and the Midland has a goods station, and passengers by that line arrive and depart from the Great Northern Platform. Omnibuses and flies are announced to meet every train, and flies and cabs may be had at the Railway Inn, adjoining the station, and from the Sun Hotel.

COMMERCIAL HOTELS.

The Commercial Hotels in the town are "The Sun," "The Swan," and "The Cock," at either of which good accommodation may be obtained.

STAMP OFFICE.

The Stamp Office is in High Street. Mr. John Palmer is the distributor.

PAPERS.

The "Herts. Express" is published every Saturday. Messrs. Carling & Co. are the proprietors. The "North Herts. and South Beds. Journal" is published every Friday. Mr. Charles Holmes is the proprietor. "Paternoster's Monthly Advertiser" is published on the first of every month and gratuitously circulated in a circuit of twenty miles.

CATTLE SALE YARDS.

Mr. George Jackson holds his Cattle Sales in the Yards at the rear of the Cock Inn; and Messrs. Harding & Eve have an extensive Sale Yard at the rear of the Sun Hotel. The entrance for stock is in Queen Street.

MANUFACTURES, &c.

Straw-plaiting is the chief employment of the women and children of the working classes. Perkins & Co. have a large agricultural implement manufactory here, where are manufactured the celebrated Drag Harrows and Perkins'

Double and Three Furrow Ploughs ; also the Patent Shafts for Reapers and Mowers. Mr. John Gatward employs a number of hands as iron founder and agricultural implement manufacturer. Mr. William Ransom carries on a large business as chemical distiller. The cultivation of lavender, introduced here by the late Mr. Edward Perks, is still extensively carried on by his son, Mr. Samuel Perks, and by Mr. William Ransom, both of whom have received Medals for their choice productions. Mr. Alfred Ransom has very extensive lime kiln works. Malting is extensively carried on here by Messrs. Lucas, Mr. W. Hill, &c.

NURSERY GARDENS.

In several parts adjoining the town are extensive nursery gardens. Those belonging to Mr. William Fells, of the Market Square, are situate near the Cemetery, on the Station Road, and near The Folly. Those of Mr. John Fells, of Starling's Bridge Nurseries, are near the Gas Works and on the Station Road.

GAS WORKS.

The Gas Works are situated near Starling's Bridge. The Company supply consumers at 5s. 6d. per 1000 feet, with a discount of 10 per cent. on all accounts paid within two months after becoming due. Mr. W. Phillips is the manager and secretary, and Mr. P. T. Harris is the clerk in charge.

FIRE BRIGADE.

A very efficient Volunteer Fire Brigade has been established some years. The members wear a very suitable uniform when on duty. A new Engine, on an improved principle, lighter in draught and more manageable than the large engine hitherto used, has been lately purchased. Mr. James Lewin is the superintendent. Mr. Logsdon is the secretary.

FIRE ESCAPE.

A building is erected on the ground adjoining the Town Hall, and a Fire Escape has been presented to the town by the Royal Society. The members of the Fire Brigade have charge of it.

SWIMMING BATH.

Some years since a Swimming Bath was opened for the use of the public. A Company was formed by shareholders of £1 each. During the summer months it is a great boon to the inhabitants of the town, and many residents in the neighbourhood avail themselves of it. The water is supplied from the River Hiz. Tickets may be obtained at Paternoster & Hales' Library, Sun Street.

UNION WORKHOUSE.

In a MS. history we find the following description :—

"The Workhouse was formerly situate at the bottom of Tyler's Street, at the corner of Mill Lane, by the Priory, which lane is now closed. It was afterwards removed to Bancroft Street, and was purchased of George Blaxland, for the sum of £800, raised by two annuities, viz.: one of £48 per annum, and the other of £52 per annum, secured on the amount of the poor's-rates. These annuities ceased upon the demise of the persons to whom they were granted. This estate was formerly the residence of William Maurice Bogdane, Esq., Lord of the Manor of Hitchin, since used as a school for the education of children of the people called Quakers, and since as a Workhouse. The master, Stephen Swaine."

For upwards of thirty years, subsequently, the house was occupied by Mr. Goodwin, who kept a commercial academy here, and it is now in the possession of his successor, Mr. Durrant. When the Poor Law Act came into operation the present Union Workhouse was erected, and is situate in a very commanding position, overlooking the town, and is capable of accommodating about four hundred inmates, but the Poor Law Board has fixed the number at three hundred and thirty-two. The union comprises twenty-eight parishes. The average number of paupers in the House at any one time is one hundred and seventy. In 1866 a new infirmary was built capable of accommodating forty-four patients. Oswald Foster, Esq., is the medical officer for the Workhouse. The whole of the premises are enclosed by a brick-wall. Mr. J. Wakenell is the master. Mrs. J. Wakenell is the matron. Mr. G. A. Passingham is the clerk to the Board of Guardians.

POLICE STATION.

The Police Station is situate at the bottom of Silver Street. The Hitchin Divisional Force consists of one inspector, one sergeant, and eight constables.



Panoramic Survey.

THE range of chalk hills which outskirt the north of Hertfordshire are extremely interesting to the lovers of the picturesque and the student of nature. From the base of these hills numerous brooks and rills gently issue forth to fertilize the vales through which they flow, and by their united streams form the rivers Lea, Ivel, and Cam. The deep bed of gault which underlies the peaty soil of the fens and the sands of Bedfordshire stretches up the valley of the Hiz, in which the town of Hitchin is built. At the extremities of the valley it comes in contact with the chalk, which, being of a porous nature, absorbs the rain which filtrates through it till it reaches the close compact gault and from thence flows to the surface and forms the springs at Well Head, Orton Head, Cadwell, Purwell Head at St. Ibbs, The Nine Springs, The Shadwells at Walsworth, and Moor Mead. Immediately above the gault is a bed of sand and loam, varying from seven to seventy feet in thickness; above the sand is cretaceous gravel, the strata of which are very much distorted, being mixed with layers of coarse drift, and contains a variety of fossils. In some parts large boulders are found, composed chiefly of hard compact sandstone. This bed is also found in some places lying above the chalk on the summits of the hills, as at Benslow, or Benchley Hill, near the Railway Station, where it fills up large basins or hollows in the top of the chalk.

On the south-east side of the town a bed of Ferruginous clay, from which red bricks of excellent quality are made, overlies the gravel, or where the gravel bed is missing it rests upon the sand as the sand does upon the gault.

The hills which rise above the town on the S.E., S., and S.W. are of similar composition, the various strata corresponding with each other on either side of the valley.

The line of demarcation which the chalk makes is tolerably distinct. Nightingale Lane, Windmill, and High-bury, to Ippollitts Brook on the east; Chalton to Orton Head on the west; the intermediate space being principally sand, gravel, and clay. The chalk crops out in the Baptist Burial Ground and takes the line of the road to Bedford till it meets the gault in West Mill Fields.

The opening of the ground for laying the sewers along the streets of Hitchin afforded a favourable opportunity for ascertaining the nature of the soil, which was as follows:—

Park Street	}	Sand
Queen Street		
Bridge Street	}	Sand with basins of chalk nodules
Sun Street		
Bucklersbury		
Market Place		
Biggin Lane		
Back Street		
High Street	}	Gravel
Bancroft		
Portmill Lane		
Church Yard		
Tilehouse Street,		Sand
West Lane, and thence to Bearton	}	Clay intermixed with stones
Wimbush Lane,		Gravel
Gas Works, . . .		Gault with chalk nodules
Radcliffe Road.		Chalk

Some interesting discoveries of what Hitchin was in the olden time were made during the excavations: In Bridge Street and Portmill Lane the stream was crossed by a ford, or washway, with only a foot bridge for passengers; near the Horse Pond and in the Market Place, at the east corner, where thick layers of the horns of oxen, evidently placed there to form a foundation for the road in the same manner that faggots are used in the roads through woods, horns at that time being considered of but little value; a wall of considerable height, entirely made of them, was in existence not many years ago against an excavation in the sand near the entrance to the town in Park Street. The remains of a Pilgrim's Staff with spike and ferrule were

found near the entrance to the Churchyard. In High Street, at the bottom of Brand Street, (formerly a narrow entrance to the town called Pound Lane), the bones of a horse, which had been buried with its harness on, were found a little below the surface, probably owing to the bad state of the road it had met with an accident and been suffered to remain with only a slight covering of earth.

At the lower end of Bancroft the rivulet which flowed from Cap's Well down Silver Street (probably so called from the silvery appearance of the water caused by its reflecting the sun's rays at noon) joined the Hiz at Starling's Bridge, then only a foot bridge.

From these trifling discoveries we are enabled to form some idea of what sort of a town it was at the time when the young prince, afterwards Henry VIII., fell into the stream in consequence of his leaping pole breaking when he was here for the amusement of hawking. Then the inhabitants found pleasure in the baiting of bulls at Bull Corner (the Triangle); in dancing round the May Pole at the bottom of Sun Street, then called the Town Yard; in practising archery in Butt's Close; then Bucklersbury was famed for its makers of shoe and knee buckles, as well as for bucklers to bear the swords. From the Market Place to the bottom of Bancroft, maltings were in every yard on each side of the street; fellmongers and tanners had their yards and pits on the sides of the river. The corn was sold from sacks pitched in the open market in High Street. Wool combers were an important class of men, and merchants of the staple came here to purchase wool for export to Calais for the use of the cloth workers of France and the Netherlands. One of these merchants, who resided here, is interred with his wife and children in the chancel of the parish church. A building for weighing wool stood in the Market Place. This being the principal market for the barley grown in the immediate neighbourhood and in Bedfordshire, and the malting trade being carried on with vigour, it naturally followed that breweries would be established. This was the case, and so famed was the beer and ale that Queen Elizabeth called it her Hitchin wine. Store houses for keeping the beer in large casks were erected along the lane at the back of the present British Schools, where it was suffered to remain twelve months to ripen

before it was sent out to consumers. It would appear from the names of some of the adjacent fields that hops were formerly grown to a limited extent and to the present time wild hops make their appearance every year in many hedgerows.

Several very old mulberry trees, still in existence, seem to remind us of the attempt made by some of the Huguenot refugees to establish the growth of silk; but in this they were not so successful as in the introduction of the making of straw plait, which is a constant source of employment to the women and children of the labouring population.

The parish of Hitchin not having been subject to an Enclosure Act, most of the ancient footpaths, or as they are generally termed "Church paths," are preserved, which is a great advantage to the inhabitants, for they are thus enabled to obtain fresh air and delightful scenery without trespassing on forbidden ground. The views of the surrounding country from the adjacent hills are very extensive and beautifully diversified; the historic associations too, add much to their interest.

Standing on Windmill Hill and looking across the newly-erected buildings and junction of railways, we see the range of hills on the summit of which was formerly the Danish Camp at Willbury; just below, the Roman road, called the "Icknield Way," crosses the river, giving the name of Ickleford to the village; carrying the eye along it, the village of Pirton lies a little beyond, where was another camp, the site of which is still called "Dane Field." A sheep fair is held here at the beginning of winter; (may not this have originated in the necessity of supplying the camp with mutton to be salted for winter use when there was not sufficient pasturage for the flocks?) High Down, with the adjacent Tingley Wood, next catches the eye; then Beacon Hill, a bold projecting spur of the chalk range, from whence may be seen the fertile lands of Bedfordshire, the avenues of stately trees in Silsoe and Ampthill Parks, and at its foot terraces in the chalk with the comparatively flat bottom which form such a marked feature in the denudations of that formation—a striking instance of which is in the next hollow, generally known by the name of "Pegsdon Barns." The Icknield Way from thence crosses the high table land, called "Lilley

Hoo," on which stood one of the old Semaphore Telegraphs; descending the opposite slope, passes by Mortgrave, where was once a Roman stronghold, and leaving Ravensborough, another Danish fortress, a little to the north, the intersection of two Roman roads will be found at the foot of Warden Hills, in the parish of Streatley (or Street land), the one being the Icknield Way and the other a branch from the Watling Street, and which led from Verulum to Godmanchester. A short distance from Beacon Hill is an elevated spot known by the name of "Mark'ems Hill," doubtless, a point of observation in troublous times; at its foot to Wellbury. Along the top of the range which takes a southerly direction are the lands of the Merican King, Offa, who resided somewhere near the village of Offley. A woodland district next presents itself and many fine oaks stand as monuments of departed greatness. There can be no doubt that the forest was well stocked with noble game, the names of places showing their connexion with the chase. Thus King's Walden denotes an enclosure for the royal stags, and St. Paul's Walden a similar place for those belonging to the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, who, if they were not lovers of sport, could relish a good haunch of venison. Stagenhoe, too, on the border of Hitch Wood, reminds us of the same. On the summit of the next hill is the hamlet of Preston, with its village green, in the centre of which stands a lofty elm tree, which was planted on the day when George III. was crowned. During the year 1871, a well was dug near this spot on the village green. The first sixty feet was cut through a black gaulty soil, mixed with small particles of chalk, vegetable matter, and shells. At forty feet below the surface, a piece of oak was found (now in the possession of Francis Lucas, Esq.,) in a good state of preservation; beneath the gault is a bed of about twenty feet of gravel and sand, after which is the main bed of hard chalk, in which a good supply of water was found at about the depth of 220 feet.

The Knights' Templars had here a mansion and grounds, called "Temple Dinsley," which stands at the head of a ravine in the chalk range.

The ruins of Minsden Chapel, on the brow of the hill, and a small chapel on the opposite hill, at Almshoebury,

denote the piety of our forefathers. These were in connexion with the Nunnery at Elstow. The Church at St. Hypollitus (a celebrated doctor of horses), is on the top of a steep hill of sand and gravel. This formation stretches along till it reaches the chalk beyond Stevenage; clay in many places resting on it. The chalk range next appears at Chesfield, taking a northern direction, and here, it is worthy of note, occurs a singular phenomenon regarding springs and water courses: The chalk, being porous, readily absorbs all the rain, but in the winter when the ground has been rendered hard by frost and is afterwards covered with snow, should a sudden thaw take place, the surface being sealed by the frost, it will not receive the water, which, consequently, rushes down the sides of the hills and along the valley in which the village of Graveley is situated, passes through Great Wymondley and between the hills in the parish of Ippollitts, gaining strength as it proceeds till it unites with the Purwell stream at the Nine Springs; thus it is but reasonable to suppose that the underground stream, which flows all the year, and the surface torrent of winter come from the same water-shed and arrive at the same spot. The name by which it is known is "Ash Brook." (Ash is a British word signifying water.)

On the Great North Road, near the village of Graveley, is a considerable elevation which goes by the name of "Jack's Hill," from its having been the scene of depredations on travellers by a noted highwayman called "Jack o' Legs." Tradition speaks of him as a man of very tall stature, who, when he walked through the streets of Baldock, could look into the upstairs windows; his principal abode was a cave in the parish of Weston. When he found his end approaching he (like Robin Hood) called for his bow that he might shoot an arrow to mark the spot where he wished to be buried. The arrow glanced on the roof of the chancel and from thence fell to the ground near gate of the churchyard, where two small stones, about twelve feet apart, still denote the head and foot of the grave of this once celebrated character. It may be worthy of note that there is still a family named Legs residing in that neighbourhood.



Surrounding Neighbourhood.

WILLBURY HILL.

AT Royston the Icenings Street crosses the Herman Street coming from Dunstable, going into Suffolk. This, about Baldock, appears but like a field way and scarce breadth enough to allow a coach to pass. The farmers on both sides industriously ploughing it up. Between Baldock and Ickleford it goes through an entrenchment, taking in the top of a hill of good compass but of no great elevation. It consists of a vallum only, and such a thing as I take to be properly the remains of a British Oppidum. It is called Willbury Hill, and is said to have been woody, not entirely beyond memory.—*Stukely's Itinerarium*, pages 73 & 74.

The Inkening is the boundary of Ickleford against Norton, and passeth through that piece of ground on Willbury Hill, which is enclosed by a vallum and has been thought a Roman camp of the Explorators. A part of this spot is in Hitchin parish. A Faustina has been found at Willbury, now in possession of Sir Robert Abdy; but one swallow does not make a summer. The medal is, of course, silver, and the common size, and not scarce. Because it is the only one found hereabouts, I will describe it. On one side is the head of Faustina, wife of Aurelius, inscribed "Faustina Augusta." Reverse: Two little children sitting on a bed, inscribed "Sæculi Felicitas." This medal was struck upon the Empress being brought to bed of twins, Commodus and Antoninus. The first child lived to be Emperor; the younger died at four years old. What was the use of this enclosed piece of ground, which the Ikening way goes through the middle of, is hard to say. It seems

to have been about seven acres, enclosed with a vallum of four or five feet high. The one half of the vallum is now to be seen, and in its pristine state, except what the rains in 1200 years may be supposed to have washed away. It is upon a small rising ground with an ascent to it every way, but by no means upon eminence enough for the security of a camp without greater fortification than there are any traces of. Neither does it appear to me to be a British Oppidum, which was defended always by a fosse, the earth perhaps all thrown inwards, they took a greater compass of ground for that purpose, and a place where groves or hills protected them from cold or winter storms. I should take it to be contrived for some theatrical entertainment, some exercise for the youth, or for rural sports, such as a great number of spectators might attend. The vallum might be to keep off the crowd from pressing upon the actors. There is here an intersection of the Ikening by another road which seems to be a vicinal way to Sandy, in Bedfordshire, by Arlsea, Henlow, Clifton, Southil; or, perhaps, by the three first of these, and so to Shefford, upon the Watling Street. The other branch of this from Willbury points towards Stevenage and Hertford. To confirm this, Arlsea, in old charters, is Alrichsea. This might come from Aldridge, the same as Old Ridge, and is the name of a parish in Staffordshire, in which is Barbeacon, an old Camp, the Etocetum of the Romans, as I presume, Aldridge there and Alrichsea here, may both have been named from the Military Agger.—*Salmon p. 160.*

In Gough's Camden, Fol. 1789, Vol. 1., 342. Willbury Hill, in Hitchin parish, is a camp of about seven acres, half the vallum defaced, which Salmon supposes an amphitheatre. A silver coin of Faustina was found here. Ickneild Way passes over this Hill, which is a mile or more from east of Ickleford, and which Stukeley and Salmon suppose a British town, but there are little signs of it. On the east and north sides it is level with the field, on the west a bank and ditch—not large. On the south are some straight banks, but such as are in many places made by the plough on declining ground. This is that way pretty steep, but there seems never to have been any entire fortification. They say iron and pieces of swords, &c., have been found there.

In a MS. History of Hertfordshire, written in the early part of the present century, is the following:—

“This place is situate about two miles N.E. from Hitchin and in the several parishes of Hitchin, Ickleford, Holwell, and Norton, and forms a very conspicuous part in history. In the year 1795 a great quantity of bones of oxen was found near this spot in making a new ditch for the enclosure of Norton Field. In the year 1802, a large quantity of human bones were found near the piece of ground now planted with furze. On the 18th of January, 1816, a quantity of human bones and three small coins of the Emperor Constantinus, &c., were found in the bank opposite the furze. On the 31st of January, in the same year, the largest and most distant of three barrows, situate southward of the Ickneild Road, in a field belonging to Mr. John Moore, of Hitchin, occupied by Mr. Thomas Hailey, of Highover Farm, was opened, and at the depth of nine feet from the summit and near the centre, were discovered the bones and ashes of some person, supposed to be an Ancient British or Roman Military Chief. The bones appeared to have been burnt and deposited in a case of wood, as part thereof was found, also charcoal in the ashes. On the bones was also found a small blade of copper, in length three inches and a half, and in breadth one inch, completely encrusted.* Many of the bones upon which this lay were tinged with green from the moisture of the ground, and two tops or heads of spears.”

Of Roman coins a great variety has been found at different periods—some in fine preservation.

ICKLEFORD.

ICKLEFORD derives its name, possibly from its situation near the river upon the Roman military way, called the Ickneild Street, which passes through it in its way from Baldock. This parish was enclosed by an Act of Parliament passed in the sixteenth year of the reign of King George the Third.

MANOR OF ICKLEFORD.

From the omission of the name of this village in the Book of Domesday, it is probable that it was waste land at the time of the Conquest, or that it was included in the parish of Pirton. In the year 1659 it was in the possession of Thomas Ansell, and descended in his family until it

*Mr. George Crawley, of Cadwell, has in his possession a number of relics found in the surrounding neighbourhood, and he always expresses gratification in showing them to visitors.

became vested in Mary, the daughter of Thomas Ansell, of Ickleford, who became the wife of Thomas Goostrey; which Thomas Goostrey and Mary his wife, sold this manor in 1777 to Thomas Whitehurst, clerk; and he, in the year 1788, conveyed it to Thomas Cockayne, Esq., upon whose death, in 1800, it descended to Thomas Cockayne, Esq., his son, and from him it descended to his daughter, the Hon. Mrs. Ryder, the present possessor thereof.

MANOR OF ROMERWYK, OTHERWISE RAMERICK.

Sir Henry Chauncy asserts that this Manor was parcel of the possessions of the Church of Ramsey, and cites as authority for his assertion an agreement in the Monasticon between Aldwin, Abbot of that Monastery, and Renaud de Argenthem, in the time of King Henry I., which was confirmed by King Edward I., on the 10th July, in the eight year of his reign: but this agreement concerns the mills of Ickleford, and certain lands there which Renaud de Argenthem held of that Abbey for the term of his life.

This Manor appears to have been possessed at a very early period by Richard de Reinbudecort, the son of Guy de Reinbudecort, who came into England with the Conqueror, and to have descended from him through the families of Foliot, Ledet, and Braybrooke, in which it continued until it became vested in Elizabeth, sole heiress of Sir Gerard and Petronilla Braybrooke, who became the wife of William Beauchamp, summoned to Parliament as Lord St. Amand, in right of his wife, anno 27 Henry VI. He died on the 19th March, anno 35 Henry VI., leaving Elizabeth his wife surviving, by whom he had a son Richard, found, at the time of his father's death, to be of the age of four years. This Richard Beauchamp married Anne, daughter of Sir Walter Wortisley, Knight, and by his will, dated 12th June, 1508, gave his estates in the county of Hertford, and other counties, in case of lack of issue by the said Anne, his wife, to Anthony St. Amand, otherwise Anthony Wroughton, his natural son by Mary Wroughton; which said Anthony for 1000 marks sterling conveyed on the 18th of June, anno 11 King Henry VIII., amongst others, the Manor of Ramerwick, to John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, and Hugh Ashton, Archdeacon of

York, in fee: who on the 26th of February, anno 12 Henry VIII., conveyed this Manor to the Master, Fellows, and Scholars of St. John's College, Cambridge, who are the present possessors thereof.

THE CHURCH.

The Church, which is of Norman structure, dedicated to S. Katharine, consisted until 1858 of a Chancel and Nave covered with lead, having a square Tower at its west end, with a ring of five bells, covered by a tiled roof, surmounted by a short spire. The entrance to the Nave on the south side is through a handsome Saxon doorway, which is almost entirely concealed from the sight by an ugly porch of more modern date. The Church was handsomely restored in the year 1859, the whole of the cost being borne by the Hon. Mrs. Ryder in memory of her father, Thomas Cockayne, Esq. The celebrated architect and church restorer, Sir G. G. Scott, R.A., added a south aisle, the arches between it and the nave being of stone and handsomely carved. A small chantry or chapel was also added on the south side of the chancel. A handsome stone pulpit, new oak seats, the east window, the smaller windows in the Chapel of All Souls, were filled with stained glass at the same time. The altar and the railings are very meagre and shabby, not at all in keeping with the rest of the Church. We understand that at no distant date this portion of the Church will be restored in a suitable manner. On the north wall of the nave is a monument to the memory of Richard Ansell, Gent., of Bedfordshire. On the floor is an old stone with half-length effigies of a man and woman in brass, with this inscription:—

Hic jacent Thomas Somer, a Mariona uxor ejus, que Mariona obiit t'cio nonar' Januar' quor' a'i'abz p'piciet ds.

One of the slabs on the floor of the nave is to the memory of Henry Boswell,* died 8th February, 1780, aged 90 years. Elizabeth, his wife died 13th March, 1782, aged 70. Elizabeth, daughter of William and Hannah Boswell, died 12th October, 1796, aged 3 years.

* This Henry Boswell, still traditionally remembered as "King of the Gipsies," was born in an encampment near the Six Hills, Stevenage, and died at Orton Head.

The living is a Rectory, formerly held in conjunction with the Vicarage of Pirton. In the survey made upon the dissolution of the Monasteries, in the 26th year of the reign of King Henry VIII., it was valued in the King's books at £8 per annum.

The two livings were separated previous to the death of the Rev. T. W. Thirlwall, B.D., in the year 1846.

This living is in the private patronage of the present Rector, the Rev. T. I. Walton, M.A., St. John's College, Cambridge, who was instituted by the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Rochester, on the 24th of May, 1869.

The village is well supplied with Schools, built by the Hon. F. D. Ryder in the year 1848.

MEPPERSHALL.

ABOUT two miles north of Ickleford is a detached portion of land, rather more than a square mile in extent, which, though belonging to the County of Hertford, is entirely enclosed by the County of Bedford—one of the boundaries of the parish goes across a close in front of the Parsonage of Meppershall, then directly through a house into the village street, which it crosses three or four times, so that some of the houses are in Bedfordshire and some in Hertfordshire. Before the Rectory House of Meppershall was re-built, there was to be seen carved on a beam in the old parlour through which the boundary passes, this doggerel rhyme:—

“If you wish to go into Hertfordshire
Hitch in a little nearer to the fire.”

The barn now standing was originally a chapel. It has been used as a barn for nearly two centuries, Salmon mentions that in his time (1728) the Rector of Meppershall was accustomed on every Ascension Day, to read the Communion Service in this place, after having read the first service in the church.—*Cussans' History of Herts.*

TEMPLE DINSLEY.

FROM Cobham's "Manuscript History of Hitchin and Neighbourhood," it appears that Temple Dinsley is one hundred and one years older than Minsden Chapel and above two hundred years older than the Priory of the White Carmelites at Hitchin.

The Lord of this Manor claims a priority over several other manors, and also a right of fishing from the River Hiz to the Ivel, at Biggleswade.

(Salmon, p. 166):—"There was a Castle once at Dinsley, the site of which the Prior of Wymondley rented at 10s. per annum." This was probably succeeded by the Mansion House, which was left by the Sisters and Co-heirs of Benedict Ithell, Esq., to Mr. Thomas Harwood, who gave it to Mr. Joseph Darton, from whom it descended to his son, Mr. Joseph Darton, who died in 1795, leaving a daughter, Marianne, and a son, Thomas Harwood Darton. The present proprietor is Mr. William Henry Darton.*

(Chauncy, 376):—"Menlesdine, Preston, and Densley are Hamlets within the Parish of Hitchin. Barnard Baliol, son of Guy de Baliol, Lord of the Manor of Hitchin, gave to Knights Templars land with £15 per annum, called 'Wedelee,' a member of Hitchin, and rough and plain fields, with the Grove called 'Fluvios,' which gift was made in the capital of Rome—when Pope Eugenius was present on the octaves of Easter; and at Paris where the King of France, the Archbishop of Sceaver, Bardell, Rothomage, Drascumb, and one hundred and thirty Knights Templars clothed in their white vestments, were present; and Everard de Bretvill, Theodore Waleran, Baldwin Calder, and divers others, were witnesses, and King Stephen did confirm the grant. The Master of the Knights Templars in England claimed by the grant of Henry III. in all their lands, divers large privileges, with exemption from all secular services, soc, sac, toll, them, infangeneth, utfangthef, hamsocne, &c., and discharge from

* In July, 1873, the mansion and three hundred acres of land, in the parishes of Hitchin, Ippolitts, and Kingswalden, constituting about one half of the estate, were sold to Captain Pryor, of Clifton, in the parish of Shefford, Beds.

all business in all places, &c., and causes, &c., and from all toll and custom, &c., in as ample a manner as kingly power can grant to any religious house, and also free-warren in Dinsle, &c. An agreement was made between the Knights Templars and the Abbess and Nuns of Elnestow, by the assent and freewill of their chapters, that the Nuns of Elnestow should find a chaplain, who should reside at Dinesle and celebrate mass on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays in every week in the mornings, and vespers in the afternoons, unless it should happen that a festival should fall in the week, then that should be accounted one of the three days; and the chaplain or minister of Hitchin, shall make oath to the brethren for the performances of these duties; and the Knights Templars shall pay to the Nuns, with all integrity, all the tythes of corn issuing out of all the lands which they plough in Hitchin, of whom the church of Hitchin, or the church belonging to it, was used to have received tythes, and also of all the ground newly broken up and sowed."

(Chauncy, 178):—"In the twenty-first year of the reign of Edward III. it was found that the Prior of the Hospital of St. John's of Jerusalem, in England, held the Manor of Temple Dinsley with the appurtenances, which lately was the Templars, in free, pure, and perpetual Alms, of the heirs late of the Lords of Hitchin, Dinsley, Furnival, and King's Walden, by finding yearly two chaplains to celebrate divine service in the chapel of this manor for ever, for the souls of the feoffees of the Templars for all secular services."

On the 15th August, 1312, the order was dissolved in England, the Knights imprisoned, and their estates forfeited. The Knights of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem in England, commonly known as the Knights Hospitallers, succeeded to the Templars, in the possession of this manor, and they continued to hold it until the Dissolution of Religious Houses in England, when it was taken by King Henry VIII.

MINSDEN CHAPEL.

Salmon, at page 166, says:—"There was a Church at Menlesdene, or Chapel of Ease to Hitchin, the walls of it are yet standing, but it is uninhabited and coming to the

ground." A description of its present situation cannot be better illustrated than by quoting the following lines written by Mr. Wallis, once a resident of Hitchin:—

ON THE RUINS OF MINSDEN OR MINZELL CHAPEL.

The rising sun had chased the shades of night,
 And each obscuring mist had fled the light,
 The cooling zephyrs gently as they pass
 Stirr'd every leaf, and bent the tender grass.
 Perfuming odours rose; the warblers sung,
 And with their music all the valleys rung;
 Charmed by the pleasing prospect of the fields,
 To taste the pleasure which their beauty yields,
 To breathe the sweetness of the morning air,
 I leave the town and to the plain repair.
 A mould'ring structure then appeared in view,
 Around whose top the creeping ivy grew,
 Once a fair church adorned with curious art,
 In crumbling stone now dropping part from part;
 While thorns and briars interwoven round,
 Vie with its top, and fill the desert ground,
 Denying entrance to the curious eye,
 To view the graves that underneath them lie.
 While thus my thoughts with meditation glow,
 And thus my words in mournful accents flow:—
 "Is this the place, where numerous footsteps trod,
 Where living votaries filled the House of God,
 Where the full chorus of the sounding choir
 Bid one loud strain of pray'r and praise aspire?"
 How silent now the desolated spot,
 Its paths untrodden, and its use forgot.
 Of noxious reptiles, now the haunted scene,
 Hang with cold dews, and clod with baleful green.
 All day the redbreast mournful ditty sings
 With mournful ditties, plaintive echo rings;
 And bards ill-omened, at the day's decline,
 With boding sounds profane the hallow'd shrine;
 While mournful shadows stretched along the plains,
 Move with the wind, and scare benighted swains.
 Just such is man, when vig'rous youth is fled,
 And feeble age has silver'd o'er his head;
 Downwards he sinks, deserted and forlorn,
 Of all he meets,—the pity or the scorn,—
 None haunt his dwelling but the reptile race,
 Who hope his fortune, or expect his place;
 Yet shall he rise and mount the realms of day,
 Where youth immortal shall no more decay.

Divine Service was performed in this chapel as late as the year 1738, as by the Register of Marriages and Baptisms appears:—

MARRIED.

- 1737.—Jan. 12. George Lyle and Susanna Hanscombe, by Licence, Minsden Chapel.
 1737.—June 5. Edward Lyle and Ann Hanscombe, by Licence, Minsden Chapel.
 1738.—July 11. Enoch West and Mary Horn, by Licence, Minsden Chapel.

WILLIAN.

WILLIAN is situated about three miles N.E. of the town of Hitchin, and contains 1856 acres of land, and a population of 300. It extends about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles eastward from the Letchworth Park Lodge as far as to the town of Baldock. Willian is mentioned in Domesday Book, written about 1086 A.D., by order of William the Conqueror, which gives a catalogue of all the land belonging to the parish, the amount used as private garden and pleasure grounds, the number of farmers and labourers living in the parish, and required to till it, the quantity of arable and pasture land, the number of pigs that certain woods were calculated to feed, and the comparative value of the Manor in the time of Edward the Confessor, and in that of William the Conqueror. The land appears to have been first let to farm and rents to be paid after the Norman Conquest. The oldest recorded possession of the Manor of Willian in the Domesday Book is given as follows: "This Manor Leuric Huscarl, a dependent of Earl Lewin, held and could sell." This means, probably, that the Manor of Willian was Leuric Huscarl's freehold property.

Willian, in common with Hitchin, Wymondley, Offley, &c., had belonged to the Kings of Mercia, and afterwards to the Saxon Kings, and after the Battle of Hastings, it having belonged to King Harold, passed to William the Conqueror, and it was called then as well as before that time, *Terra Regis*, the land of the King.

The word "Willian" is variously spelt as Welei, Wylie, &c. It is thought to have been the name of a Saxon saint, probably a man of wealth and reputation. And as there is a monument in the church, dated 1624, to one Edward Lacon, of Willie, in Shropshire, it seems as if the estate in that county, now called Willey, and belonging to Lord Forester, and Willian, in Hertfordshire, must have derived their names from the same St. Willian.

The village had been called Wickley, from the Latin word *Vicus*, a street or village, and *ley*, a Saxon word signifying "farm lands." The words being amalgamated possibly in the same sort of way as in architecture, Roman and Saxon stones are in the course of time sometimes found built up together.

In the time of King Henry II., this Manor which was then partly in the Half-hundred of Hitchin and partly in Broadwater Hundred, belonged to Ralph Punchardon, and there is a house in the village still called "Punchardon" or "Punchendon Hall," having been built probably on the site of a former house of that name.

In Ralph Punchardon's time, one Gilbert de Tany, a powerful Baron, who possessed a part of the parish, let for a small rent to the Monks of St. Albans $1\frac{1}{2}$ Virgates (or 30 acres) of land, and his successor confirmed the grant, provided they would pray for his own soul, the souls of his father and mother, his parents, and his friends! And the monks had to pay to the Cellarer of the said Gilbert de Tany 5s. at the four usual terms of the year.

The Punchardons seem to have continued to be Lords of the Manor till the time of Richard the Second, when Henry Frowick succeeded them. He, dying childless, it passed to John Thurgood, and from him to his daughter, who was married to Sir Thomas Cheiney, and from him to the Needhams, in the time of Henry VIII. Thomas Rivet, of the county of Cambridge, succeeded them, and then came Edward Wilson, in whose family the Estate remained for some years. The first recorded date of the appointment of any Clergyman to Willian, appears to be A.D. 1239, when Grosthead, the good and learned Bishop of Lincoln, instituted Robert Decmursh to the living. The Patrons, in this instance, were Thomas de Paveley and

Roger, his brother knights.* These, it is probable, were Knights Templars, who we know at one time held land in Willian.

Then Eleanor, the faithful Queen of Edward the First, appointed to the living; and more than a century after this, in the year 1416, Richard Goldon or Gildon, whose brass monument was found when the church was restored in 1870, was appointed by the Prior and Monks of Dartford, in the Diocese of Rochester. Richard Goldon died in October, A.D. 1446, and was succeeded by John Kyrkeby, on December 22nd, 1446. Henry the Eighth appointed Stephen Green, 27th October, 1543, and there are several old monuments in the Church with inscriptions on them concerning the owners of the estate and the clergy of the parish of various dates.

The Church was probably built about A.D. 1100, from the Norman arches lately discovered. It has a good organ and three bells.

The present Lord of the Manor is C. F. Hancock, Esq., of Hendon Hall, County of Middlesex, who bought the estate from the late Baron Dimsdale's family.

There are a few names written in the parish books as far back as the date 1685, the same as those of some of its present inhabitants, and these same families may have been, and probably were, much earlier resident at Willian than at that date. Several new cottages have lately been built by C. F. Hancock, Esq., and the church has been lately restored. New Schools have also been erected.

WALSORTH.

IN 1815 a resident writes:—"On the farm of Mr. John Wilshire, on the right hand side of the road, near the river, stands an old Willow Tree, bearing an oak, an ash, a currant tree, and a briar. This tree still stands on the bank of the stream opposite the Ship Inn.

* R. Decmursh was, it is possible, a Templar himself.

BALDOCK.

BALDOCK was founded by the Knights Templars, soon after 1139, upon land of the Manor of Weston, given to them by Gilbert Earl of Pembroke. They seem to have built an hospital in it for leprous members of the order. They also erected a church; and in the first year of Henry III. obtained a royal charter constituting the vill a fair and market town. The fair was to be held yearly on the feast day of St. Matthew and the next four days, and is still represented in what is now popularly known as the "Old Fair." This fair is referred to in Pepy's Diary. The name conferred upon the town by the Templars was Baudac, probably in honour of Baudoin or Baldwin the second king of Jerusalem, the first great patron of their fraternity. This original name afterwards passed through divers variations. Thus it is found written Baudac, Baudoc, Baudok, Baldoc, Baldok, Balldocke, Bauldoake, Bowldoake, Baldocke, &c. On the suppression of the Order of the Temple in 1327, the Manor and Advowson of Baldock passed to their rivals the Knights Hospitallers.

The present church is supposed to have been erected sometime during the fifteenth century upon the site or foundations of the original fabric. Among the parish muniments there is preserved a Grant, dated 1289, from one Walter Cateyl, of a yearly rent charge towards repairing the Church of the Blessed Mary at Baudak.

In June, 1647, Charles I. passed through the town towards London, under the escort of Cornet Joyce. As he entered it he was met by the parishioners headed by their venerable Rector, the Rev. Josias Byrd, in full canonicals. The misfortunes of the king had moved the loyal feelings of the old clergyman, and he determined to avow them publicly. Presenting the communion cup filled with wine to the King, he saluted him—"May God bless your Majesty!" The King, doubtless somewhat surprised, enquired the name of the saluter. "Please your Majesty," was the reply, "I am Josias Byrd, the parson of Baldock, and I offer you this cup for your refreshment." Whereupon the King drank, and returning the cup, humorously observed, "Mr. Byrd, I thank you: I did not think I had so good a *byrd* in all my kingdom!"

King Edward II. seems to have spent a Christmas here, for in his Household Book appears the following entry :—
 “To Dulcia Withstaff, mother of Robert, the King’s fool, coming to the King at Baldock at Christmas, ten shillings.”

STEVENAGE.

THE original name of this town was Stigenhace or Stigenaught, which was first corrupted into Stevenach, and afterwards by an easy gravation to its present name.

The Church, which is dedicated to St. Nicholas, consists of a nave, chancel, and aisles. Upon each side of the chancel is a small chapel, and close to the altar are two niches for containing holy water. This church was partly restored in 1871, and the patron of the rectory, John Allen, Esq., of Oldfield Hall, near Manchester, besides liberally subscribing to the Restoration Fund, gave a brass lectern of great value to the church.

Nearly three-quarters of a mile south of this village are six large barrows, arranged in one line upon the east side of the road. They have, with considerable appearance of probability, been ascribed to the Danes. A few of them have been opened, but without leading to any important discovery.

One of the greatest attractions of Stevenage in the old coaching days, and even now, is the coffin, which is said to contain the remains of Henry Trigg, who made the following eccentric Will :—

IN THE NAME OF GOD, AMEN.

I, HENRY TRIGG, of STEVENAGE, in the County of Hertford, Grocer, being very infirm and weak in body, but of perfect sound mind and memory, praised be God for it, calling into mind the mortality of my body, do now make and ordain this my last WILL and TESTAMENT, in writing, hereafter following ; that is to say :—Principally I recommend my soul into the merciful hands of Almighty God, that first gave me it, assuredly believing and only expecting free pardon and forgiveness of all my sins, and eternal life in and through the only merits, death, and passion of Jesus Christ my Saviour ; and as to my body I commit it to the West end of my Hovel, to be decently laid there upon a floor erected by my Executor, upon the purlin, for the same purpose ; nothing doubting

but at the general Resurrection I shall receive the same again by the mighty power of God ; and as for and concerning such worldly substance as it hath pleased God to bless me with in this world, I do devise and dispose of the same in manner and form here following.

Imprimis. I give and devise unto my loving brother Thomas Trigg, of Letchworth, in the County of Hertford, Clerk, and to his Heirs and Assigns for ever, all those my Freehold Lands lying dispersedly in the several common fields in the Parish of Stevenage aforesaid, and also all my Copyhold Lands, upon condition that he shall lay my body upon the place before mentioned ; and also all that Messuage, Cottage, or Tenement at Redcotes Green in the Parish of Much Wymondly, together with those Nine Acres of Land (more or less) purchased of William Hale, and Thomas Hale, Jun. ; and also my Cottage, Orchard, and Barn, with four acres of Land (more or less) belonging, lying, and being in the Parish of Little Wymondley, and now in the possession of Samuel Kitchener, labourer ; and all my Cottages, Messuages, or Tenements situate and being in Stevenage, aforesaid ; or, upon condition that he shall pay my brother, George Trigg, the sum of Ten Pounds per annum for life : but if my brother shall neglect or refuse to lay my body where I desire it should be laid, then, upon that condition, I will and bequeath all that which I have already bequeathed to my brother Thomas Trigg, unto my brother George Trigg, and to his heirs for ever ; and if my brother George Trigg should refuse to lay my body under my Hovel, then what I have bequeathed unto him, as all my Lands and Tenements, I lastly bequeath them unto my nephew William Trigg and his heirs for ever, upon his seeing that my body is decently laid up there as aforesaid.

Item. I give and bequeath unto my nephew William Trigg, the sum of *Five Pounds*, at the age of Thirty Years ; to his sister Sarah the sum of *Twenty Pounds* ; to his sister Rose the sum of *Twenty Pounds* ; and lastly to his sister Ann the sum of *Twenty Pounds* ; all at the ages of Thirty Years ; to John Spencer of London, Butcher, the sum of *One Guinea* ; and to Solomon Spencer, of Stevenage, the sum of *One Guinea*, Three Years next after my decease ; to my cousin Henry Kimpton, *One Guinea*, One Year next after my decease, and another *Guinea* Two Years after my decease ; to William Waby, *Five Shillings* ; and to Joseph Priest *Two Shillings and Sixpence*, Two Years after my decease ; to my tenant Robert Wright the sum of *Five Shillings*, Two Years next after my decease ; and to Ralph Lowd and John Reeves, *One Shilling* each, Two Years next after my decease.

Item. All the rest of my Goods and Chattels, and personal Estate, and Ready Money, I do hereby give and devise unto my brother Thomas Trigg, paying my debts and laying my body where I would have it laid : whom I likewise make and ordain my full and sole executor of this my last Will and Testament, or else to them before mentioned ; ratifying and confirming this and no other to be my last Will and Testament, in witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this Twenty-eighth day of September, in the year of our Lord One Thousand Seven Hundred and Twenty-four.

HENRY TRIGG.

Read, signed, sealed, and declared by the said Henry Trigg, the Testator, to be his last Will and Testament, in the presence of us who

have subscribed our names as witnesses hereto, in the presence of the said Testator.

JOHN HAWKINS, SEN.

JOHN HAWKINS, JUN.

X The mark of WILLIAM SEXTON.

Proved in the Archdeaconry of Huntingdon, the 15th day of October, 1724, by the Executor Thomas Trigg.

Situate about a mile from Stevenage, is Redcotes Green, a locality which has become popular throughout England within the last few years by the residence there of a very eccentric individual, named Lucas. The premises having been referred to as "Tom Tiddler's Ground," and the resident, "The Hertfordshire Hermit."

The following sketch of this eccentric individual is taken from a pamphlet issued in 1874, by Messrs. Paternoster and Hales:—

"Mr. James Lucas, was born in 1811, and descended from an ancient and wealthy Irish family. His father was a member of the firm of Chauncey, Lucas, & Lang, of Liverpool, who were extensively engaged in the West Indian trade, and his mother was a Liverpool lady, whose maiden name was Beesley, she was connected, it is said, with the Payne family, of Blunham, in Bedfordshire. He had one brother and two sisters, one of his sisters married the Count de Taaffe. The hermit first came to reside with his parents, at Redcotes Green, when he was eight or ten years of age, and those who remember his earliest years describe him as having been a strange child, given to fits of solitude and possessing none of the desires or graces of other children. From his youth he was froward and wilful, and the germs of those eccentricities, which in after life made him so notorious, were even then to be noticed. He was educated at a private school at Clapham, and later in life he was placed with Mr. Hicks, a surgeon, at Whitwell, for the purpose of studying medicine. He was passionately attached to his mother, and when she died—in October, 1849—he exhibited intense sorrow and absolutely refused to allow her body to be interred. He caused her corpse to be strongly encased and, night and day, for thirteen weeks he sat at the head of it a silent watcher. At length the law of sepulchre was enforced and the body was taken away and interred in the family vault in Hackney Churchyard. As soon as his mother's funeral was over, he at once commenced that life of isolation which won for him an unenviable notoriety, from that time he became an anchorite. He discarded thenceforth every comfort and luxury in life. He lived in what had been the kitchen, literally in sackcloth and ashes. For his raiment he had a blanket, for his bed a heap of cinders. He lived chiefly on bread and milk, and to avoid any tampering with his food he had the can containing his milk padlocked during its transit from the farm to his residence,



PORTRAIT OF THE HERMIT LUCAS.

By permission of the Proprietors of "LONDÓN SOCIETY."

and he would always choose his bread from a number of loaves. Of all the fortune to which he was entitled he only received the income arising from certain gas shares which yielded about £300 a year. The accumulation of property during his period of solitude must have exceeded £50,000. His visitors comprised all classes, from the most educated to the humblest. None could converse with him without perceiving how acute his intellect was, and how large a fund of information he possessed. Sometimes he had a dozen or more beggars at his window at once, and if they satisfactorily answered the question he put to them, he relieved them all. It was not easy for a tramp to deceive him, because he never tired of questioning his visitor. Sometimes he caught tramps lying, he then sent them away without any money or gin. In the latter part of his time he kept constantly a watcher—by night and day—to protect him from any that would annoy him. He was excessively fond of children, none of whom were sent away empty, but the little girls were unquestionably the better cared for. When not occupied in entertaining children or in relieving tramps the hermit took to his ashes, or would seat himself at the front window and inspect passers by through his eye-glass. All his knowledge of the world and its doings for the last quarter of a century he obtained by *viva voce* examination. His end was in keeping with his miserable life. In the absence of the companionship of his friends and relatives he had spent the best years of his life, and shut out from their sympathy—alone, in the dead of the night—he was stricken with apoplexy, and death claimed him for his own. He was discovered in a fit on the morning of Friday, the 17th of April, 1874. His body was buried in Hackney Church Yard, April 25th."

IPPOLYTS.

THE Church of this Vill was dedicated to a supposed Saint called St. Hippolyts, from whom the Vill received its name, who was a good tamer of colts, an excellent horseleech, and so devoutly honoured for these qualities after his death that all passengers that passed that way on horseback, thought themselves bound to bring their steeds to the high Altar in this Church, where this holy horseman was shrined, and a priest continually attended to bestow such fragments of Hippolyts' miracles upon their untamed colts and old wanton and forwarn jades as he had in store, and did avail so much the more or less, as the passengers were bountiful or hard handed, but he that was niggardly of his coin, had but a cold and counterfeit cure. The horses were brought out

of the North Street, through the North Gate, and the North Door of the Church which was boarded on purpose to bring up the horses to the altar, since which time the Church has always been boarded.—*Chauncy, page 181.*

The Church was built about the middle of the fourteenth century and extensively altered towards the close of the fifteenth century. The register dates from the year 1710. The living is a vicarage united with that of Great Wymondley; joint yearly value £330, in the gift of Trinity College, Cambridge, and held by the Rev. E. T. Carey, M.A. There are several charities belonging to this parish, which are distributed at the discretion of the vicar. There is a National School, supported by voluntary contribution.

KINGSWALDEN.

CHAUNCY, in his "History of Hertfordshire," states that King Henry VIII granted the Rectory, Church, and Advowsons of the Vicarage of Kingswalden to Sir Ralph Sadlier, Knight, and that Richard Hale, Citizen of London, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, purchased this manor, and the estate has remained in the Hale family ever since. The Church had fallen into decay. On the death of the wife of the present proprietor, Charles Cholmley Hale, Esq., which occurred on the 29th of September, 1867, he determined to restore the church as a memorial to her to whom he was so affectionately attached. In April, 1868, the work was commenced under the superintendence of Messrs. Nesfield & Shaw, of Argyle Street, London, by Mr. Forsyth, of Hampstead Road. The whole of the old pews and gallery were taken down, and handsome seats erected, made of oak grown on the estate. The pulpit is of stone, and the reading-desk of oak. The stalls in the chancel are handsomely carved and the arms of the Hale family and the motto "*Vera Sequor*" are on each. The living is a donative of the annual value of £100, in the gift of the Lord of the Manor, and is now held by Rev. H. F. Corrance, M.A.

ST. PAUL'S WALDEN.

ABOUT seventy years before the Norman Conquest this parish was bestowed by Wulfgar, a minister of King Ethelred II., upon the Abbot and Monks of St. Alban, hence the name by which it was formerly known, Abbot's Walden. The Abbot and Convent of St. Alban continued to hold this manor down to the time of the Dissolution, when it came to the King, who granted it to the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, London, who have since continued Lords of this Manor. The Church is dedicated to St. Paul and contains a number of tablets to the families who have been residents here. The Rev. R. H. Neate, M.A., is the Vicar.

KIMPTON.

KIMPTON is a parish and village. At a very early date this Manor seems to have become separated into several smaller Manors. For many years it was held by the family of Mordaunt, ancestors of the Earls of Peterborough, but in the early part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth it was vested in John Ruston, Esq., and Christiana, his wife, Thomas Walford, Esq., and Mary, his wife, and Katherine Brown, widow. These ladies were probably grand-daughters of Sir John Mordaunt. It was subsequently purchased by Thomas Hoo, Esq., of St. Paul's Walden, who had issue an only surviving daughter, Susannah, who brought this and other estates in marriage to Jonathan Keate, Esq., who was created a Baronet by King Charles II. in 1660. This Sir Jonathan Keate rebuilt the mansion at the Hoo, adjoining the old Manor House, portions of which still remain. In 1732 it was conveyed to Margaret, widow of Thomas Brand, Esq., from whom it has descended to the Right Hon. Thomas Brand Trevor, 22nd Baron Dacre, who is the present Lord of the Manor. The Church is dedicated to SS. Peter and Paul, and was built in 1400, and restored in 1861. The present Vicar is the Rev. T. D. Croft, M.A., Oxon. There are several charities belonging to this parish.

GREAT OFFLEY; or OFFLEY ST. LEGER.

GREAT OFFLEY received its appellation from King Offa, the great king of the Mercians who was Lord thereof, and resided here. It may be interesting to know that the Manor of Offley was, in the early part of the sixteenth century, in possession of Sir Thomas Boleyn, the father of Anne Boleyn, the unfortunate wife of Henry VIII. The manor was sold by Sir T. Boleyn to Richard Farmer, and by Richard Farmer's Earls Spencer and Dukes of Marlborough. Sir John son to Sir John Spencer of Althorpe, the ancestor of the Spencer gave the Manor of Offley to his fourth son, Sir Richard Spencer, who built the house now called "Offley Place," in the year 1600. The great-granddaughter and sole heiress of the above-named Sir R. Spencer, married in 1714 Sir Henry Penrice, LL.D., Judge of the High Court of Admiralty; and the only surviving child of this marriage, married in 1751 Sir Thomas Salusbury, LL.D., and also Judge of the High Court of Admiralty. The manor was devised by Sir Thomas to his cousin, Sir Robert Salusbury, of Llanwern, in the county of Monmouth, and was by him sold to his brother, the Rev. Lynch Salusbury, Vicar of Offley, who had then (1806) taken the name of Burroughs. The Rev. L. Salusbury (Burroughs) was succeeded by his only surviving child, Elizabeth Mary, who married her first cousin, Sir Thomas Salusbury, of Llanwern, and died in 1867. She devised the manor and estate to her cousin, Anne Salusbury Steward, the widow of G. E. Hughes, Esq., of Donnington Priory, Berks., who now resides at Offley Place. (Mr. Hughes died in 1872.) The house was partly pulled down and rebuilt by the Rev. Lynch Salusbury (Burroughs) in the early part of the present century. It is well situated and substantially built. The Church, standing in the park of Offley Place, is not remarkable when viewed from the outside. The chancel was rebuilt by Sir Thomas Salusbury about 1740, or 1750, and is ill suited in appearance to the other part of the church. The interior will repay a visit. On the north wall of the chancel is a remarkable monument to Sir H. Penrice. It consists of a sarcophagus of black marble, surmounted by a beautiful female figure in

statuary marble, representing Truth; a torch in the right hand, and a laurel leaf in the left. On the south chancel wall is another monument in memory of Sir Thomas Salusbury and Dame Sarah his wife. It was executed by Nollekens, and has great merit. Sir Thomas is represented standing on a pedestal of white marble, and receiving from the hands of his wife a chaplet of laurel. There is an oak tree in the background, from which a curtain falls over a sarcophagus of black marble. Sir Thomas and his wife, before marriage, being near neighbours, were at constant feud; one day, during a thunderstorm, they happened to take refuge under the same oak tree.* In this embarrassing situation it occurred to them that the best way of terminating their feud would be by an alliance offensive and defensive. In short, Sir Thomas then and there proposed to the Honble. Mrs. King, and in due course they were married. This romantic event accounts for the oak tree in the monument. The figures are worthy of the artist's reputation. There are other busts and monuments of interest in the chancel. On the wall of the south aisle of the church two tiles are placed above which is the following inscription, "These tiles were found within this church, 1777, which proves that King Offa was buried here." A rubbing was, however, taken of them a few years since, and forwarded to the Society of Antiquaries, and their reply was, "The reading on the tiles is beyond all dispute *In te Domine confido*, and the inscription has no more to do with Offa than with Mr. Gladstone." Cussans in his History of Hertfordshire, says:—"The last word certainly looks like "Offa," but I was much puzzled to decipher the preceding word, until happening to hold the rubbing I had taken of one of the tiles up to the light, and looking at it from behind, I discovered the inscription to be in reverse *Offa Will be*, on the other the word *Mundo*, but I cannot decipher the word before it." And he considered Offa was buried at Hemel Hempstead. There is but little doubt that Offa died at Offley, and Matthew Paris states that Offa was buried at Bedford.

In the early part of 1875 a movement was set on foot to restore and re-seat this ancient church. The landowners

* The tree under which the courtship was carried on still stands on the Welbury Estate, near Mr. Smoothey's Farm House.

and residents liberally subscribed for this purpose, and the work was carried out to the entire satisfaction of the parishioners, by Mr. Bates, of Stevenage, under the superintendence of the Rev. Thirlwall Salusbury, and Messrs. R. Marsh and H. Miller, the churchwardens. The old-fashioned pews, the tall pulpit, and the singing-gallery, have been removed and replaced with modern open benches, pulpit, reading-desk, &c., and the organ has been removed to the chancel, and considerably improved. During the alterations a stone coffin of great antiquity was discovered. The church was re-opened for public worship on March 21st, the Sunday preceding Easter-day, 1875.

There are several charities belonging to this parish from which £135 10s. 3d. is carried annually to the School Fund.

LITTLE OFFLEY.

LITTLE OFFLEY is a hamlet which once consisted of divers houses, as is evident by the marks of ancient foundations often dug up there, and did belong to the parish of Great Offley; but since these houses came into possession of one person they have been reduced to one house, which was held by Knight's Service until the taking away of a Court of Wards and Liveries. It is situated on the great ridge of hills which crosses the northerly part of this county, called by some "The Alps of England," and bounded on the north by that famous Roman Road, called "Icknield," which in this place divides this county from Bedfordshire; the height of these hills turn all the waters that fall on the southern part to the River Lea, which leads to the Thames, but the waters that fall on the northern side, to the River Ouse, which empties itself into the sea at Lynn, in Norfolk.—*Chauncy, page 197.*

In the time of Henry VIII. this Manor was vested in the crown, and was granted about the third year of the reign of Philip and Mary, to Richard Spicer *alias* Helder, from whom it descended to William, Richard, William, and Richard successively, the last named died without issue in

1719, whereupon the manor came to his youngest sister Anne, wife of Richard Sheppard, gent., who had issue three daughters, Harriet-Lavinia, Caroline-Dunn, and Mary-Hill. The manor eventually came to the last named, who was married to Mr. Henry Charles Sawyer, Park Keeper to the Duke of Bedford, whose only child Harriet-Elizabeth, is the wife of Richard Marsh, Esq., of Little Offley, to whom the estate now belongs.

HEXTON.

THIS parish is a narrow slip of land about four miles in length and one in breadth. The name seems to be derived from Heagstanes tun, the town of the high stone. In Domesday written Hegæstanestone, a name peculiarly appropriate, as the hill known as Ravensbury Castle was a place of great importance, and one of the most conspicuous landmarks in the locality. Tradition ascribes the construction of Ravensbury Castle to the Danes, but though possibly occupied by them for a time, there can be little doubt that the summit of the hill on which it stands was entrenched by the Britons, and further strengthened by the Romans. The Church which is dedicated to St. Faith, was, with the exception of the tower, entirely re-built in the year 1824, by Joseph Andrew de Latour, Esq. In a history of this parish which is now preserved among the *Additional MSS.* in the British Museum, is an account of St. Faith's well, at which miracles were said to have been wrought, and of a chapel adjoining, in which an image of the Saint was preserved. The well has long since been filled up, but its site is marked by a large wooden cross.

WELLBURY.

WELLBURY formerly belonged to the Saxon Kings, and at the time of the compilation of Domesday Book was held by William I. The Manor afterwards came into the possession of Samuel Burroughs, Esq.

In 1840, Ann Burroughs, second wife of the Rev. Lynch Salusbury (who, in accordance with the will of Dame Sarah Salusbury, assumed the name of Burroughs), purchased the manor of the Marquis of Winchester, and on her death, in November, 1856, it came to her sister Maria, wife of James Newbury, Esq., of Clapham Rise, Surrey, and in 1872 it passed by sale to Francis Gosling, Esq., in whom the Manor is now vested.

OFFLEY HOLES.

OFFLEY HOLES is a Farm in the Hamlet of Prestoti, situate about two-and-a-half miles west of Hitchin. It is the property of the Curling family, and is now occupied by Mr. Charles Davis. The house is substantially built of brick and placed in a bottom, therefore commands but little prospect, and that to the north only. It is situated between hills, viz.: The Downs on the right and Pinnacle Hill on the left. From Pinnacle Hill a commanding prospect is obtained. On this hill the late Mr. John Curling placed a flag-staff, on which he hoisted a flag on particular occasions, when he resided at Offley Holes. On the opposite side of Pinnacle Hill he planted fir trees and evergreens which renders this situation pleasant.—*MS. History.*

In the *Gentlemen's Magazine*, April, 1810, page 306, there is a letter giving an account of the means adopted by the Curling family to obtain possession of this estate. See also vol. 79, page 1086.

PIRTON.

PIRTON is an ancient village and parish, and derives its name from a Saxon possessor named Peri; but at the conquest this, with other extensive possessions, was granted by King William to Ralph de Limesie, with whose descendants it continued until the year 1611, when one moiety of the manor was sold to Thomas Docwra, Esq., and the other came into the possession of the Provost of Eton College. A church was

here founded by Ralph de Limesie and dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, for the support of which he granted the tithes of all his lands in the parish to the Monastery of St. Albans. At the Dissolution of the Monasteries, in the reign of Henry VIII., the Manor of the Rectory of Pirton was seized for the Crown, and after many changes this gift of the pious Norman came into the possession of Sir Edmund Filmer, Bart. The existing church is not the original structure, but appears to have been almost rebuilt about the middle of the fifteenth century, as some of the old Norman work is still to be seen in the tower arches. There is a ring of five bells. The living is a vicarage, yearly value £275, with residence, in the gift of C. Bamford, Esq., and held by the Rev. Ralph Lindsay Loughborough. There is a National School for boys and girls. Toot Hill, at the base of which there are still to be seen the remains of the moat, is supposed to be the site of the keep of the ancient castle of the De Limesies, the extent of which may be conjectured from the undulating character of the ground in the immediate neighbourhood.

GREAT WYMONDLEY.

THIS parish is situate about two miles south-east of Hitchin. Clutterbuck says: "Part of this Manor was, in the time of King Edward the Confessor, the property of the Nuns of Chatteris, in Cambridgeshire; but, three years before the death of King Edward, was taken from them by Earl Harold, and annexed to the Manor of Hitchin. Harold, after the death of Edward the Confessor, took upon himself the government of the kingdom, and enjoyed the kingly office until he was killed at the battle of Hastings, Anno 1066, when it came into the possession of William the Conqueror. The other part belonged to Goisbert de Belvaco." The Church, dedicated to St. Mary, is an old building, with square tower and four bells, the apsidal chancel is of Norman architecture, as is also a curious south door. The register dates from the year 1599. The living is a vicarage, held in conjunction with that of Ippollitts, and is at present

held by the Rev. E. T. Carey, M.A., of Trinity College, Cambridge. There is a National School for boys and girls, supported by voluntary contributions.

LITTLE WYMONDLEY.

LITTLE WYMONDLEY is a village and parish two-and-a-half miles south-east from Hitchin. A priory of Black Canons formerly existed here which was founded in the reign of King Henry III, to the honour of St. Laurence, by Richard de Arghenthem, for Canons of the Order of St. Augustine. At the Dissolution this Priory had a revenue of £37 10s. 6d. The Church is dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin; it is an ancient building and contains three bells. The register dates from the year 1557. The living is a donative in the gift of Unwin Heathcote, Esq., of Shephallbury, and is held by the Rev. Willoughby J. E. Rooke, M.A., of Brasenose College, Oxford.

In this parish stands a Spanish Chestnut Tree, of great age and dimensions, which is thus described in "Gilpin's Forest Scenery," (vol. 1, page 142), "After mentioning this chestnut, (in the garden of Tortworth, in Gloucestershire), which has been celebrated so much, I cannot forbear mentioning another, which is equally remarkable for never having been celebrated at all, though it is one of the largest trees that perhaps ever existed in England. If it had ever been noticed merely for its bulk, I should have passed it over among other gigantic plants that had nothing else to boast; but as no historian or antiquarian, so far as I have heard, hath taken the least notice of it, I thought it right, from this very circumstance, to make up the omission, by giving it at least what little credit these papers could give. This chestnut tree grows at a place called Wimley,* near Hitchin Priory, in Hertfordshire. In the year 1789, at five feet above the ground, its girth was somewhat more than fourteen yards. Its trunk was hollow, and in part open, but its vegetation was still vigorous. On one side, its vast arms, shooting

* The Bury Farm, now in the occupation of Mrs. Kirkby.

up in various forms, some upright and others oblique, were decayed and peeled at the extremities, but issued from luxuriant foliage at their insertion in the trunk. At the other side, the foliage was still full, and hid all decay."

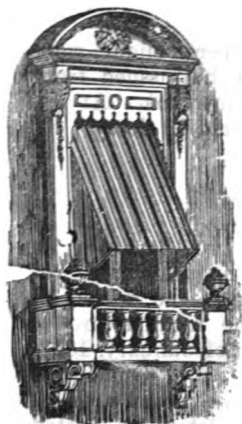
CHARLTON.

HENRY BESSEMER, who, in the year 1872, received the Albert Gold Medal of the Society of Arts for improvements in the manufacture of steel, was born at Charlton, on the 19th of January, 1813. His father, Anthony Bessemer, was born in Old Broad Street, London, and at the age of eleven removed with his parents to Holland, where, nine years later, he erected the first steam-engine in that country for the purpose of draining the soil. The following year he settled in Paris, and having made great improvements in the microscope, was made a member of the Academy of Sciences at the early age of twenty-five. He remained in Paris until the Revolution, in which he lost his whole fortune, and escaped to London, where, by his great talents and untiring industry, he rapidly recovered his position, and in the course of five or six years obtained sufficient to purchase a house and about a hundred acres of freehold land in Charlton. Among other arts to which Anthony Bessemer devoted his attention was type-founding, in which he excelled, and the quality of the metal he used may be inferred from the fact that a fount of type cast at Charlton still exists in the office where this work is printed.

The river Hiz rises at Wellhead, a little distance from Charlton, it flows through the Priory Park, and enters the town at the end of Sun Street, skirts the Priory of the Biggin not far from the church, crosses Port Mill Lane, and runs on to Grove Mill, where it joins the Pyrral. The town of Hitchin is supplied with water from a spring which rises in the Priory Park adjoining Charlton, the property of F. P. Delmé Radcliffe, Esquire, and leased by him to the Local Board of Health.

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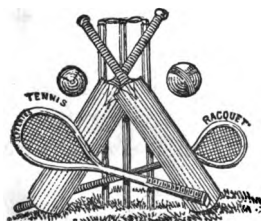
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Jaques's Croquet, from 15/0 per set. Croquet Balls, from 3/6 per set of eight. Croquet Mallets, Polished Ash, 1/0, 1/6, and 2/0 each; Hardwood ditto, 2/6, 2/9, 3/3, and 4/0; the All England Club or Cavendish Mallet with Octagon handle 5/0, large size 6/0; the Peel or Sliced Mallet, 6/6.

H. BARRELL, Market Place, Hitchin.



THE
"ROYAL HITCHIN"
LAVENDER WATER.

The great superiority of this Lavender Water (which is daily increasing in public favour) appears to be due to two or three circumstances in connection with the Distillation of the Oil from which it is manufactured. In distilling this oil a large and efficient staff of workers is employed (the immense value of which will presently appear), and the stills, which are large, are heated by steam in place of the old fashioned naked fire. The heating the stills by *steam* possesses many advantages over the *naked fire*, as by the *former* process the Lavender has no chance of getting *burned* or the *Oil* obtaining an empyreumatic odour through the application of a too great heat. To this fact may be added another of not less consequence. It is highly important that the time which elapses between the cutting of the lavender in the field and the drawing of the oil in the distillery should be reduced to a *minimum*, as the operation being necessarily conducted in hot weather, and the plant highly charged with moisture, any delay occasions the lavender to heat, which materially injures the native delicacy of the aroma—hence the value of the aforementioned large staff.

It is in consequence of the above facts that the "ROYAL HITCHIN" LAVENDER WATER has such a remarkably fine, delicate, and sweet odour, and that it is *perfectly free* from the *rankness* which, being so common in the ordinary Lavender Waters, has, in spite of the inherent claims of the lavender itself, obtained for it many enemies.

T. J. BARNETT would respectfully suggest that all who have not yet used his Celebrated "ROYAL HITCHIN" LAVENDER WATER should do so without delay, and that all Visitors to Hitchin in providing themselves with one of Hitchin productions, for which it has obtained a world wide celebrity, should take care that they get the best and purest of such productions. This can only be obtained by purchasing

THE "ROYAL HITCHIN"
LAVENDER WATER

From the Sole Proprietor and Manufacturer,

T. J. BARNETT (late Martin),
SUN STREET, HITCHIN.

Every genuine bottle bears the above Registered Trade Mark, and is put up in bottles at 1/0, 1/6, 2/0, 2/6, 3/6, 6/0, and 10/0 each.

N.B. The distiller above referred to having obtained a Prize Medal and gained such a noted reputation at home and abroad, as a Distiller of Essential Oils, &c., it could scarcely be enhanced by his name being introduced into an advertisement, but T. J. BARNETT is the *only Manufacturer* of the Celebrated "ROYAL HITCHIN" LAVENDER WATER prepared from his oil.

PATRONIZED BY THE ROYAL FAMILY OF ENGLAND AND THE FRENCH COURT.

Honourable
Mention.



International
Exhibition,
1882.

PERKS'S
PRIZE
**LAVENDER
WATER.**

Prize
Medal.



Paris
Exhibition,
1867.

"In each bright drop there is a spell,
'Tis from the soil we love so well,
From English Gardens won."

PURE EXTRACT OF ENGLISH LAVENDER FLOWERS.

THE LAVENDER PLANT, commonly cultivated in our gardens, and so highly prized for its exquisite perfume, is not indigenous to this country. It was first introduced in the year 1568, from its native hills in the neighbourhood of Naples, and has been found, under proper management, to attain the greatest perfection upon the English soil. The soil in the neighbourhood of Hitchin has long been celebrated for the production of the finest Lavender. The Proprietor has cultivated the Plant for upwards of forty years, and, after repeated experiments in the distillation, considers that the perfume now offered to the public has been brought to the highest perfection. In its preparation the *flowers* of Lavender are alone employed, which accounts for its acknowledged superiority over every other Extract of Lavender. For the Bath, it is strongly recommended for its reviving effects.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"**ENGLISH LAVENDER.**—The lavender season this year is unusually successful, as those who have visited the beautiful lavender fields of Mount Pleasant, near Hitchin, will readily admit. The lavender fields in this district have been acquiring reputation for the past fifty years, and Messrs. S. Perks and Sons have this year forwarded excellent specimens of both the flower and the extract."—THE ECHO, August 12th, 1870.

"**LAVENDER WATER.**—The lavender crop of this season is unusually fine. At Hitchin, in Hertfordshire, on the well-known lavender farm of Mr. Perks, the plants are of unusual size and fragrance. Such fine heads have not been seen in England for many years, and the weather has permitted the flowers to be collected fresh and with their bloom upon them, the conditions on which the goodness of the lavender water of any season depends."—THE TIMES, August 24th, 1866.

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EDWARDS, 38, Old Change.

BARCLAY & SONS, Farringdon Street.

SANGER & SON, 150, Oxford Street.

And every respectable Chemist in the United Kingdom.

Sold in Bottles at 1/0, 1/6, 2/0, 2/6, 3/6, 5/0, 7/6, & 13/0.

PREPARED SOLELY BY S. PERKS,
Lavender Farmer & Distiller of Flowers,
HITCHIN, HERTFORDSHIRE.

ESTABLISHED 1790.

